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He came suddenly upon a party of Cottagers.—p.7.

MORTIMER'S

COLLEGE LIFE.

BY

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MORTIMER'S COLLEGE LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

"Accept, I beseech Thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me."—Ps. cxix. 108.

"And they entered into a covenant, to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart and with all their soul."—2 Chron. xv. 12.

If my reader ever travelled in Norfolk, he may perhaps remember, when about sixteen miles from Norwich, passing through the pretty village of Dashwood; and should he have been detained in front of the "Mortimer Arms" while the coach conveying him changed horses, I shall be much surprised if his spirit of observation did not lead him to notice the little old church on the opposite side of the road, and the pretty peep of the Priory grounds, which immediately adjoin the churchyard, and are supposed by some antiquarians to have formed the garden of a monastery attached to the church, as a small portion of the Priory still stands, of the same date and style of architecture with the church.

It may not be a matter of fact to every reader of this book, that the Mortimers, whose effigies nearly fill Dashwood church, have from time immemorial been born and buried in Dashwood, and generally lived a respectable part of their lives in the Priory.

About twenty years ago the family mansion was tenanted

by the Rev. Louis Mortimer and his family, and we think we may very safely assert, that of all the abbots, warriors, country squires, and M. P.'s, that have from time to time been possessors of Dashwood and the adjacent village, none has been more beloved, and deservedly so, than this gentleman, who, to the position of owner and landlord, added the office, in his own person, of rector of the parish of Dashwood.

The rain had fallen heavily one night in July, but as the morning sun broke victoriously through the clouds, and scattered his broken rays in gorgeous and chastened hues on every rain-drop, or danced in pale golden stars on each fresh glittering flower and shrub, the spiritual eye saw the type of a mourner comforted ere his tears are dried; his sorrow, if it be of a godly sort, only making him more lovely when the sun of righteousness breaks through the cloud of trouble to cheer his fainting soul.

The pious spirit of the young Christian had drunk in the sacred lesson with the glorious morning brightness, as, roused by the clash of the church-bells from a light sleep, he stood at the window of his bedroom on the morning of his confirmation. He was not then to begin his acquaintance with a heavenly Father; it was with him an open confession of the hope and faith of some years of his boyhood. It was a serious, but hardly an anxious time with Louis Mortimer, for he knew well what it was to believe that a stronger arm than his own held him up, and that it was pledged to hold him forever. He had long wished to be confirmed, and now the joyful, solemn time was come, he hoped that in this public and sincere voluntary acknowledgment of his early dedication to the Almighty God, new strength and new help might be given, to run more patiently the race set before him.

Early as was the hour, the little village and its environs

appeared unusually lively that morning. The bustle of the little householders all betokened the advent of some important event. As the morning wore on, carts and light chaises brought into the village no small addition to the population from the neighboring villages. Between nine and ten o'clock, several carriages of greater pretensions dashed up to the "Mortimer Arms;" and as time went on, quite a crowd was collected near the park attached to the Priory, to catch sight of the mitred coach as it swept through the lodge-gates, and as they closed after the coach the mass of people moved on to the churchyard, to see the procession enter the church.

A little after ten, a long troop of young people passed in, and a minute or two after, Mr. Mortimer arrived with his eldest son, Reginald, a youth of seventeen, followed by Louis, and a young friend and schoolfellow, who had been spending his holidays at the Priory, and had joined Louis and his brother in their preparations for this rite; this virtual baptism of those who are sincere in their solemn profession, and which, we may confidently hope, has proved the time when many a dear child of God has been brought into inward covenant with Him, and been enabled by God's grace to choose the Lord for his God, and the ways of the Lord for his portion. While ascribing all conversion to the free grace of God, it is not depending too much on ordinances to believe that He who works by means, should bless this means to the souls of many of those who are, as it were, arrested then seriously by the question, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. If the Lord be God, follow Him;" "They who seek God early shall find Him;" and a sincere and heartfelt dedication to Him must bring down a blessing.

There was one among the three youths to whom the truths

of our holy religion had been presented for the first time with a personal distinctness, and this was the young friend of the Mortimers, Meredith. He had heard little of religion at home, though intended for the ministry. And though at school the doctrines of our faith had been carefully instilled by a pious master, he was there but one among a number; here he had felt a *closeness* that obliged him to look into himself, to inquire whether Christ Jesus were in him,—to see whether he himself was blameless in never having appropriated to himself one warning, one promise, one threat. Two thirds of the church were filled by the candidates for confirmation, who were gathered together as near the communion-table as possible, to listen to the few words their dear pastor would say to them before they took their places. The little building had been very tastefully decorated with flowers and evergreens. Mr. Mortimer advanced with his sons and Meredith to the table; and after mustering all present, and seeing that all were provided with tickets, addressed them in a few affectionate words, reminding them of the great importance of the act they were now about to perform, and of all they had been considering during the late examination. He spoke of the congregation which would there witness that day their solemn declaration, and of the unseen cloud of witnesses, urging on them the beginning of that race which should be continued steadily to the end, looking unto Jesus, the AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith, without Whom it is impossible to be consistently persevering. They then sang together the following hymn:

"Power from on high, O Lord, impart;
Power in Thy Gospel to believe;
Power to surrender our whole heart;
Power all Thy mercy to receive.

"The Word to us in vain were given;
We hear, we read, we learn in vain;
In vain Thy Son came down from heaven;
If Thou the Spirit's might restrain.

"Here be His sacred influence felt,
With searching, cleansing, quickening force;
Till souls of millstone-hardness melt,
And flow like waters from their source.

"Convinced and humbled in the dust,
Beneath the burden of our guilt,
We own Thy law's dread sentence just,
But plead the blood for pardon spilt.

"Thy Spirit witness with that blood,
And Christ our Saviour glorify:
May we as children born of God,
With rapture, Abba, Father! cry."

Mr. Mortimer led the two first verses himself, but became so much affected that he was obliged to sign to his curate to finish it, and stood looking at his dear young people with a heart overflowing with tender anxiety and affectionate interest.

The young people were all arranged in order in the pews nearest the communion-table when the spectators entered the church; and a short time after, an increased murmur from the throng outside told the arrival of the bishop. The clergymen went out to receive his lordship, and marshalled him up the centre aisle. As the procession moved on, the organ sent forth a solemn, quiet strain of music; and when that ceased, one of the clergymen present read the sweet service of our own dear church. At length the bishop ascended the pulpit; and after a short address, he asked that solemn question which begins the Confirmation Service, "Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the

solemn promise and vow that was made in your name at your baptism, ratifying and confirming the same in your own persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and to do all those things which your godfathers and godmothers then undertook for you?"

There was a slight pause when his voice ceased, and then arose an irregular sound of the answer, "I do." A second time the question was put, that they who had been too timid to raise their voices the first time might have an opportunity of doing so; and this time it seemed like one voice; and what did that one accord say? "*I do* renounce the devil and all his works;—*I do* renounce the pomps and vanities of this world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh;—*I do* steadfastly believe all the articles of the Christian faith;—*I do* intend, by God's gracious help, to keep his holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of my life."

Then passed the white-robed girls and the long line of boys; and it was a lovely sight to watch the simple ceremony in its important meaning, and sad to see some careless faces, and to feel that though the same prayers had been offered, and the same exhortation been made in their hearing, the same hands had been laid on their heads, they had no part nor lot in the matter; for the heart was not right in the sight of God.

To the Priory party it was, however, no light time. When the bishop had pronounced the last blessing, and their own short petitions had been offered, they reverentially left the church, and joined their friends at the park gate. You might easily guess how each young person had been impressed, by observing his or her demeanor on leaving the house of God. Some almost rushed out of the pews, ran to

their friends, talking before they were out of the church doors, and then laughing and quizzing those around, as if they had come from a merry-making; others rather less giddy stood still, more anxious to watch the exit of the bishop than to think on what had taken place; and some there were who quietly went home, and endeavored to reap a blessing from the consideration of the vows they had just publicly taken on them.

The bishop was going to dine at the Priory, and arrived a few minutes after the rest of the party.

Meredith ran up to his room as he entered the house, and Louis not caring to remain in the drawing-room, where his father and mother were entertaining the bishop, left the house and sauntered along the park until he reached a favorite spot, which had been his musing place from early childhood. A pretty garden chair had lately been placed here, in lieu of the two stones he and Reginald had formerly dragged under the weeping willow; and so completely was this nook, which went by the name of "Louis' Willow," associated with him, that it was almost as sacred to his use as his own four-walled room in-doors.

This place seemed the fittest he could choose when he desired, as on this day, to look back on his young life, and trace the way his God had led him; all the goodness that had guided his tottering steps in infancy, and made all things work together for his good. He remembered lying here dreamily listening to the bells, and wondering in which part of him his soul was. How often had he enticed his kind mother here to tell him a story or sing a hymn; and insensibly his mind wandered on to the dismal time when he was left alone with Mr. Phillips at the rectory, while his father and mother were abroad, and Reginald at school; how he

had stolen away here to cry and write Latin verses with sad pain and grief; still further his thoughts ran on, to his desire of being at school, and his hard school-boy trials, and he would thank God, whose love had blessed all to him; had made his weak character strong to glorify Him; and the very consequences of his frequent failings the means of curing much of his unmanly feebleness. Then came the immediate remembrance of the vows professed that day; and he thought happily of the privilege of being a partaker of the Lord's Supper, and was beginning to look again at some passages of a well-read letter he drew out of his jacket pocket, when Reginald's hands were suddenly placed on his shoulders, and he was abruptly asked to come and walk.

"Are you dreaming over Hamilton?" he added, as he picked up the letter which Louis had let fall.

"I was thinking of him, most certainly. I have some reason to think of him. What a friend he was to me! How thankful I am he stayed so long!"

"Still, you did very well without him this last year," said Reginald.

"It was certainly time I should do without him," replied Louis, thoughtfully. "Oh, Reginald! how full my life is of mercies! everywhere I look I see them; and I *want* to see them; that I *can* is one of them."

"It is," replied Reginald gravely; "only excuse me, Louis, lest I think you underrate yourself in thinking other people such boons to you."

"Never mind," said Louis, smiling, "I know what a poor weak fellow I am. You feel strong, and so we differ. Hamilton taught me to despise weakness in myself, and to stand alone, more than any one, and he never laughed at religion; therefore I will thank God for him."

"You certainly owed something to him when you first came to school,—at least in some things," rejoined Reginald; "but Hamilton himself would not have borne three weeks' punishment for Ferrers, as you did."

Louis colored, and changed the subject by putting his friend's letter into his brother's hand, and begging him to read it.

It was a long one, and took Reginald some time to read; and, drawing his brother's arm in his own, he perused it as they strolled through the park.

"A very nice letter, Louis," he said as he gave it back; "very much to the point, as Hamilton's letters always are; and very anxious about your confirmation, apparently. He is a good fellow. I am glad the bishop is here, for Meredith. I have been afraid he would be dull. I can't go and talk nonsense with him to-day;—not that he always talks nonsense either; but you know to-day that I want to try to feel a little better,—or, as father would say, not wilfully hinder the good that may come to me. Oh, Louis! this does not look much as if my father had been here."

The village seemed in a state of excitement, and wore the appearance of a holiday, as many of the inhabitants of the neighboring villages had come to the congregation, and remained to rest with friends or acquaintances till it was time to return. Several young persons in their Sunday dress, the girls in their new confirmation caps, stood in the cottage gardens, as the brothers passed, while others they met in twos or threes walking up and down the road. Louis hastily drew his brother back into the park, that they might not seem to countenance the giddy conduct of many before them.

"I think it will be better not to walk out of the grounds,

Reginald; it will perhaps give a handle to those people to say that we set them a bad example."

"But we know that we do not," said Reginald, scornfully, as a party, consisting of a boy and two girls, came by, laughing and screaming in a very unbecoming manner. "I am really astonished, after all my father's efforts, Louis."

"Because you forget he is a *man*, Reginald; and, then, those persons are not Dashwood people."

"But I want to know why we are to be condemned to keep within the park-railings, when our consciences are clear of any thing but the intention of taking an innocent walk?"

"Are we not commanded to avoid all appearance of evil?" said Louis. "Half the people that meet us cannot draw any distinction between our quiet walk and that of the two who have just passed; here our influence is worth something, you know; and I need not tell you how our example may strengthen papa's hands."

"You are a veritable Solomon, Louis. I wonder sometimes where you get your wisdom; now don't look grave. I did come to have a little serious conversation. Somehow you are really the only person I can talk with. You will hardly believe how my mind wanders. I can't keep it steady even for a few minutes on what I ought, and wish to be thinking of; every thing else comes in turn, and the worst is, that I do not really feel anxious about it."

"God Himself must teach us of Himself," said Louis, seriously; "and then there is no trouble in collecting our thoughts."

"But, must I not try?"

"Yes; but above all, pray that God will draw you, that you may run after Him."

"You cannot think how weakly I pray; I cannot think

my prayers of any use when they are mixed up with such hosts of nonsense."

"Ay, but the incense of Christ's name makes the simplest wish mighty," replied Louis. "We want to look more out of ourselves. Out of self into Christ. To take even our vain thoughts, and use them as a plea for obtaining help. What can we do to help ourselves? I often think of that passage on which Krummacher speaks so beautifully—our Saviour's question to the disciples on their way to Emmaus, *What things?* Did He not know *what things?*—better far than they themselves, and therefore He led them to unburden their minds, though He knew beforehand what they needed, as it were, to encourage us to tell *all* our wants to Jesus. The very telling is a comfort, Reginald. *Take with you words*, they may be feeble, but if they come from the heart, in Christ's name, they will be acceptable. The Lord says, *I will be inquired of by this people. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.*"

"Oh Louis!" sighed Reginald, "what a happy creature you are! Go on, say something to me."

Louis repeated Cowper's hymn, "What various hindrances," and then "Rock of ages," and afterwards the eighth of Romans; they then became quite silent. It has often been remarked that members of the same family feel great reserve in speaking on religious subjects to one another, and in a measure this was the case with the two brothers, though more with Reginald than Louis, and had they not been accustomed to constant interchange of thought from their childhood, it would have been greater. For half an hour they walked along in silence, we will trust profitable silence, till roused by the loud ringing of the dressing bell, they separated to dress for dinner. The bishop was an amiable,

pious man, and assisted by the chastened tone of his conversation the impressions of the day. After dinner he left the Priory, and the evening was spent in singing sacred music, till at an early hour the family retired to rest.

CHAPTER II.

"Give glory to the Lord your God, before He cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, He turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth ME."—*Jeremiah* xiii. 16; ix. 23, 24.

IT was a summer evening, a bright, fair, peaceful evening, just after the confirmation, when a solitary horseman might have been seen some two or three miles from Dashwood, on the Norwich road. He was well mounted, and rode with that careless, indifferent air of confidence, that displayed his familiarity with the exercise,—if exercise it could be called,—that elicited so little exertion. The reins were lying on the horse's neck, and the animal moved lazily along, apparently where it listed, but, in reality, skilfully, though somewhat mechanically, guided by the practised hand of his master through the tortuous way that led to Dashwood. The rider was a young man of a slight but perfectly well-built and gentlemanly figure, of the middle size. There was something undeniably aristocratic in the lofty carriage of his head, and his easy air of indifference. He was not strictly handsome; and yet, when you caught a full glimpse of his liquid gray eye, you thought him beautiful,—whether fired with the en-

thusiasm of his own thoughts, or gazing more frequently in thoughtful vacancy into the distant space. His face was rather sunk and thin about the cheek-bones; but its brilliant color, and the animation of its expression, contradicted the idea of ill-health, while, as he now and then lifted his hat from his head, as a relief from its warmth and weight, in his expansive forehead, and the dark silky hair usually attributed to a nervous temperament, the image of a lofty intellect rose before you.

So he rode on, seemingly indifferent to all around him, yet alive to all,—apparently buried in his own meditations, yet storing in his mind future food for them, when, turning one of the many windings of the long lane, he came suddenly upon a party of cottagers, consisting of a young woman, who was carrying a baby, and two older children,—one a girl of about eight years old, and the other a boy of about half that age. This last,—a great sturdy fellow,—was sitting in the middle of the road, crying passionately, so directly in the rider's path, that he with difficulty checked the horse in time to prevent it from walking over the child.

"Halloo! my good woman," he exclaimed, "you should take better care of your offspring. What's the matter with the youngster?"

The woman curtsied, apologized, thanked, and finally explained to him that the rebellious young gentleman had been spending the day with her in the next village, about three miles distant, and now declared he was too tired to proceed.

"Are not you a pretty young fellow?" exclaimed the gentleman. "Get up this instant, and go on."

"I ti—ed!" roared the child, without moving.

"You naughty child!" exclaimed his mother, taking his arm, and shaking him. "Get up; don't you see you'll be

run over. Oh, sir, he's a trying boy; and it's church night, too, sir," she continued, in a despairing tone, "and I'll never get there in time. Get up, David, or I'll tell your father."

"Get up, sir, this instant!" cried the stranger sternly. And the startled child rose, and, with his finger in his mouth, moved a few steps, only to renew his cry of "I ti—ed!"

"Can you help him here?" said the gentleman, after a moment's pause. "There—so; now, if you cry, I'll throw you over the hedge; do you hear that?"

Half frightened, and half pleased, the child sat passively before his new friend; and, amid thanks from the mother, they all proceeded down the lane,—the horse first, and the relations of the crying child behind. As the lane widened, the young man slackened his pace, to accommodate his humble companions.

"Where am I to put this young man down?" he asked.

"We are going to Dashwood, sir. Maybe you are not going on so far, sir?"

"To precisely the same place, my good woman: so we shall be *compagnons de voyage*, I presume, as far as the limits of your own."

The woman looked very closely at him as he spoke, and, perfectly conscious of the scrutiny he underwent, a slight smile curled the corners of his mouth.

"You said it was church night," he remarked. "What may 'church night' be?"

"The night as we goes to church," replied the little girl.

"And is that always Wednesday?"

The mother answered in the affirmative.

"That's rather irregular, isn't it?" said he; "most people go on Sundays."

"Ay, sure, sir," said the woman, quietly; "and most on

'em goes on Wednesdays too; only this here naughty boy has hindered me to-night."

"Then you put Wednesday into the bargain? You are pious, good sort of people hereabouts, I suppose?"

"Bad's the best of us, sir," said the woman, in rather a puzzled manner.

"Then, I am sure, the best must be my friend David here," added the young man.

"Oh, law, sir! he's a naughty boy," said the woman.

"Very! Who preaches at the church?"

Mr. Mortimer to-night, sir; and I'm afraid I'm late, sir."

"Well, that depends upon what you call late; and it is a matter on which I can hardly decide. It's now exactly one quarter of an hour to seven, which, considering all things, I am disposed to call rather good time."

"Quarter to seven!" repeated the woman, despondingly; "it's begun a quarter of an hour."

"Well, we are not very far from the church now," said the gentleman. "Is David to be taken there?"

"Oh no, sir, thank you; I must put him to bed, and my girl will take care of the baby."

"I am afraid you stand a good chance of hearing the fag end of the sermon," replied her companion, as he drew in the reins of his steed, and good-naturedly lifted the boy down to his sister, who had run on before, and now stood at a cottage to receive him. "Good-by, David; mind I hear a better account of you when I come this way again."

"And I'm sure I'm much obliged to you, sir," said the woman, with a profusion of curtsies.

"And I'm sure you're very welcome," he replied, raising his hat in acknowledgment of her deep reverence.

"Well, sure!" she said, as she stood watching him canter

down the road. "He's a real gentleman. I'd fancy I know'd his face. I wonder if he be going to the Priory, Betsey?"

As Betsey could not answer, the wondering cottager turned into the house, and finding David and the baby both more troublesome than she anticipated, was obliged reluctantly to give up her intention of going to church that night.

Meantime our hero, as if well acquainted with the way, cantered along the shady road till he reached a lane that led to the church. One side of this lane was bounded by a wooden paling, which divided it from the park, and over this the thorough-bred mare was easily persuaded by her master to leap, and then carried him quietly across the park to the house.

"I suppose every one is at church," said the gentleman to himself. "But at least there will be some one to take care of the premises, I presume, even in Utopia."

The noise of the horse's feet on the gravel path in the front of the house soon brought an answer, in the guise of a man-servant, at the hall door.

"Are the family all at church?"

"Yes, sir; they'll be home at eight. Will you walk in, sir, and rest till church is out?"

By this time the stranger had dismounted, and stood looking at the white-haired domestic with a laughing countenance. "So I am grown out of all recollection, eh, Jones?"

"Indeed, sir, I do not recollect you," replied the man respectfully.

"Well, I recollect *you*, however, and many's the time I have given you some reason to remember me, years ago; years alter us young folks more than you older ones. Mr. Reginald has not returned to school yet?"

"He does not go back, sir, I believe. Mr. Reginald has left Dr. Wilkinson's, and Mr. Louis is to go for another year, I hear say. They're all at the church, sir; and there's a young gentleman staying on a visit, from Dr. Wilkinson's, sir, a nice, free-spoken, merry young gentleman, rather fond of mischief or so. But that's young blood; all young folks is alike, sir; Mr. Reginald's fond of fun, sir; now Mr. Louis and Master Neville are quite of another sort, and—"

"And are quite patterns of morality, and all that sort of thing," interrupted the stranger; "and, I suppose, grown young giants in length?"

"Mr. Louis is very tall, sir, and so like master, the very image of him, and likely to be just such another."

"Well, will you see that my horse is taken care of? My luggage will be here by the coach, and I will go to the church for the present."

"Might I make bold to ask your name, sir?"

"Vernon Digby," replied the young man, turning mischievously off as he spoke, with a speed that effectually stopped all demonstrations of the astonishment and welcome visible on the face of the old man, who, after advancing a few steps from the door in pursuit of him, satisfied himself with a long-drawn sigh, and a "Well, to be sure!"

The hushed beauty of the home scenery around was suited to the young man's feelings at this time, just returned from the excitement and activity of Cambridge, where his rising name, for the last year or two, had been the envy and admiration of every ambitious mind, and the pride of his tutors and college. There was in him a rare combination, the wise said, of genius and industry, and the results in human eye would be splendid. To what might they not look forward from such an intellect? There was nothing in which he did

not excel. What cost others such labor to attain, a short period of industry for him, and it seemed beneath his feet, and another hill presented itself, to be mounted as easily: yet though his rising fame had spread so widely in Cambridge, he was not quite what is understood by a "reading man," nor had his success been acquired by systematic cramming. No one more keenly enjoyed the healthy recreations of the University, though want of physical strength prevented his attaining to much excellence in them, and a wine or supper party was considered a double treat if he formed one of the number. Yet he was proud and ambitious, conscious of superiority, though disdaining all exhibition of it. "I do know more than some," he once answered a friend; "I know that I know nothing. How much more there is to learn! What folly to speak of learned men! We're all in our cradles yet, man."

But the hurry and bustle of Cambridge was over for the present, and the under-graduate drew a long breath after a rapid retrospect of the last few months, and stood still to drink in the utter tranquillity. His being seemed to bathe itself in the long golden streams of light on the turf, and the hush almost gave him a sense of giddiness. For some moments not a sound of any kind reached his ears, and when at length it came it was but the low of a cow and the slight rustle of the leaves above him, increasing to a rushing sound as they bent to the passing breeze.

"And, after all, what is it worth?" he exclaimed, with a long-drawn sigh. "I am not satisfied, I want more: a human being never can be satisfied in this existence," he thought; "he is meant to progress. I feel my existence is to mount; a world lies before you, Vernon, up!" and then a quiet smile and the old thoughtful vacancy stole over his

features, and he strolled on, almost unconsciously, till he reached the little gate which opened into the churchyard.

As he laid his hand on the latch a burst of choral melody came from the open doors and windows of the church, accompanied by the swelling sound of a small organ. Vernon was not unmoved; the sound was in unison with the calm beauty without. He paused a moment to listen, and when the first verse was concluded, he traversed the intervening space and entered the little building.

Ordinarily, when Vernon Digby entered a church his first care was to satisfy himself as to its architectural properties, but a different feeling somehow stole over him as he stepped into this well-filled place of worship—a feeling of reverence and solemnity. Uncovering his head, he stood a minute or two near the door, till the pew-opener beckoned him to the door of a pew near. Vernon declined the proffered attention with an inclination of the head, and seated himself on a stone bench, from whence he could see both the pulpit and organ-loft. In the latter he had discovered two of his cousins, Neville and his great friend and only sister Mary, and into the former Mr. Mortimer just entered.

At first, in spite of the earnest prayer with which Mr. Mortimer prefaced his discourse, Vernon was much more intent upon watching the movements of the white frock above him than on the sermon; but by degrees the tone of his uncle's voice attracted him, and before long his attention was completely absorbed by the full free Gospel declared. It was addressed to the newly confirmed, on the text, "My son, give me thine heart." And though Vernon considered his uncle rather extravagant in his notions, there was something so real, so joyous, so elevating, that he felt almost persuaded to be a Christian! Oh! how vainly does man try to find a

substitute for this happiness! What a shadow is all else! And Vernon felt it in his heart; and yet he forced down all his convictions for the sake of the vain shadows at which he grasped. The sounds of the preacher's voice had died away; the little organist led the choir in their parting hymn; but Vernon sat still,—his arms folded, and his eyes fixed vacantly on an old tomb before him, till the proffer of a hymn-book from a neighbor roused him; and, shaking off his absorption with a suppressed sigh, he stood up, and gazed round the church till the Psalm was finished. In a few minutes the congregation had left the church, and shortly after came the Priory party. Mr. Mortimer was first with Mary and Neville; the governess with Freddy, the youngest boy, followed; then came Mrs. Mortimer, leaning on the arm of a sweet-looking delicate youth, in whom Vernon easily recognized his cousin Louis, though two years had raised him to a height that almost equalled his brother's magnificent proportions; at the same time he was so thin, that his clothes hung on him as if they did not belong to him. None of the party noticed Vernon, who remained stationary till the last couple, consisting of his cousin Reginald and Meredith, were passing him, when he started up. Reginald moved back a step.

"How, Vernon!"

"How, Reginald! So *you* intended to cut me, too."

"How did you come here?"

"What an affectionate welcome!" said Vernon.

"But, really, you know we never expected to see you here just yet," replied Reginald, shaking his hand vehemently.

"Better and better," ejaculated Vernon.

"But how came you at church? Have you been to the house?"

"To be sure; and quite frightened poor Jones, with my

intimate recollections of him. The reason why I came here is because you were here. Why, what a stalwart fellow you are grown: you throw poor little me quite into the shade."

"Poor *little* you, indeed!" exclaimed Reginald, as he stooped to latch the gate through which they had passed; "Mens magna in corpore parvo, a *multum in parvo*, Vernon. If ever I feel myself great, it will be when walking by the side of my great cousin."

"Great fudge!" replied Vernon. "How d'ye do, Meredith? I beg pardon; but you are grown enough to excuse a little remissness on my part in remembering an old schoolfellow."

"We are all growing old," said Meredith; "but if we make as good a use of our years as I hear you do of yours, we shall have no reason to regret them."

"You will have to tell me all about every thing," said Reginald; "because I am coming to Cambridge next October, having paid my adieu to our beautiful school, I am happy to say."

"Frank leaves the doctor's, and comes up, also, to his great joy; but I think you may both wish to be at school again, some day," said Vernon.

"That's what all the wise folks say," said Meredith. "But did you ever experience it, Digby?"

"Well, I don't know that I ever did. Sometimes I think of the old times, and like their memory much. De pend upon it, we are all happier at school than we are aware of."

"Hear, hear!" cried Reginald. "It is an established axiom, that we never know the value of our blessings till we lose them; but I must own, the value of school life ought to be

doubly appreciated, when an embryo wrangler condescends to regret it. But there is mamma wondering who we have got. Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry on !"

The van of the party were waiting at the hall-door, having been already informed by the butler of Vernon's arrival. As he neared the threshold, both uncle and aunt advanced to meet him, Mary and Neville having arrested him a few seconds before with hearty welcomes. And now he was led into the drawing-room, and installed on a sofa between his aunt and Reginald, to hear news, and to answer innumerable questions, while Mary and her favorite brother made and handed round the tea. Then followed that pleasant time between light and dark; and long the happy party sat, never tired of hearing scraps of college stories, till Vernon challenged his eldest cousin to a race; and leaping out of the window at the moment, both were soon out of sight among the dark trees. In another ten minutes they returned,—Reginald first, and Vernon more slowly after him, pleading his journey in excuse for his want of strength. The candles were just brought in as they entered, and presently the servants were summoned for prayers. How peaceful and hallowed that little service seemed ! Vernon did not join in the hymn which all sang; but perhaps his heart was too full. The lesson was the ninth of Jeremiah, and the prayer asked for the unfading treasures of the world to come, that all talent given might be used to the glory of the Great Giver.

They separated for the night, and Vernon was shown by his cousin to his room, with a kind hope that he would sleep well, and soon recover from his fatigues. But it was long before he lay down that night. He sat without a candle, looking on the dark star-spangled sky, or the indefinite maze of dark trees and shrubs, till a gray tint in the east warned him of approach-

ing day, when he sought his bed, and slept soundly till long past the breakfast hour.

The few days following Vernon's arrival were spent in rambles around Dashwood, and visits to old haunts, and little family pic-nics, in all of which Vernon joined with a zest that would have astonished some of his college friends, who perhaps might hardly understand the simplicity and freshness of feeling almost inseparable from true greatness of mind. Louis was soon to return to school alone; and the day before he went they had planned a ramble to a beautiful wood about five miles distant; and Vernon hearing that some good fishing was to be had about a mile further, proposed they should take their lunch and fishing-tackle, and make a morning of it. Louis was at first rather averse to spending so large a portion of his last day from home; but his objections being overruled, the rods, bait, and sandwiches were packed up, and directly after breakfast the five young gentlemen sallied forth. They had a merry walk to the wood, and, after a proper survey of its beauties, rested a little in the shade, and then proceeded to the mill-stream, which professed to supply such good fish.

Louis never had been able to overcome his sensibility on the subject of baiting the hook, his love for the worm going beyond that of the old angler; and Neville was content to look on and count the successful captures of the three anglers. Vernon was by far the most expert, though he seemed so careless, and often laughed so merrily, that Reginald scolded him for disturbing their sports.

"Well, then, I'll leave you to solitude, and go over yonder."

"Whither?" asked Meredith. "There's nothing there but a wall and water."

"Nothing?" said Vernon. "Do you see nothing?"

"Nothing, certainly," said Louis, "that you can stand on."

"But I see something very substantial in the sitting way and a capital pool, with lots of fish."

"Why, you don't mean to try to sit upon that spout?" said Reginald, laughing.

"Just the very thing," replied Vernon.

"Do you want a cold bath?" said Neville.

"Well, I've no objection. 'I'm agribble to any thing,' as the man said; I am rather warm."

"But how are you to get there?" asked Louis.

"Where there's a will, there's a way," replied Vernon, rather doubtfully. "Eureka! Eureka! Eureka!" he exclaimed, after a few moments' cogitation.

As he spoke, he caught hold of the bough of an ash that extended over the stream, and having previously fastened his fishing-tackle about him, seized his rod and threw himself on the bough, swinging it up and down; till taking the spring at the right moment, he leaped over the stream, and alighted on a narrow ledge of brickwork on the other side. The mill wall ran close up to a considerable height, and there was no other resting-place for some yards further. It was with breathless interest, and not entirely without apprehension, that Reginald watched his cousin's descent on the very slight stepping-stone. He laid his hand on the bar of a grated window near, and then feeling safe, with a little exulting laugh raised himself carefully to the spout, which had excited so much longing, and balancing himself comfortably astride on it, sat perched over the stream, at a height of some ten feet, in all the glory of a deep pool below.

"Now, how do you mean to get back?" shouted Reginald. "You are very clever to get there."

"I shan't trouble myself to come back till I am tired," said Vernon, coolly baiting his hook. "I shall have such

sport; and now I won't talk." Vernon felt there was some reason not to talk, for the truth was his prized seat was betraying him, being half covered with moss and very slippery. It had been all very well as long as he sat quite still on the small horizontal portion which jutted from the interior of the mill, but a little motion in throwing his line had displaced him, and in vain he put his hand behind him, and tried not to look foolish, or to acknowledge his precarious situation. Reginald was hooking a fine roach, when a laugh and loud halloo drew his attention. "Here goes a large bait! The fish'll get me! Ahoy there, Reginald!" and he looked up in time to see his cousin's rod first fall, and then the owner slip swiftly off the treacherous spout after it, with both hands behind him, in a vain attempt to stay his descent. Plump! splash! It was almost too deep for a laugh, but the mill was not working. Reginald shouted for help, and was throwing off his coat to plunge in to Vernon's assistance, when the missing one who had disappeared from the height of the fall, now rose above the water, and striking out, reached the land near his companions, and climbed up the bank before they had well understood the matter. When he was safely landed, he first shook himself after the fashion of a Newfoundland dog, and then indulged in a hearty fit of laughter, in which his friends now joined.

"You see you need not have troubled yourself about my return; I am back again as quick as thought."

"And now," exclaimed Reginald, "you spoil-sport, you thorough-bred, noisy, unsportsmanlike bather, I suppose we must pack up and return home for your benefit."

"Sit down and go on fishing," replied Vernon. "I'll walk about in the sun, and then I shall be as dry as a bone."

"I dare say," said Meredith. "But we are not so wrapped up in our sport as to kill you for love of it."

"I am not so easily killed," answered Vernon. "I won't go home."

"Indeed you shall," exclaimed Reginald.

"Now, you know I may be led, Mr. Reginald, but never driven," said Vernon. "If you behave like good men, and pursue your sport with due decorum, I'll walk to the mill and get dry. They will lend me a fustian suit 'for a consideration,' and then I will come to you."

"Well, if you will promise that—"

"I'll go with you, Vernon," said Neville.

"How are you to get across?" asked Vernon.

"Oh! there's a bridge round that corner," replied Neville; "I will show it to you."

"I am not fond of long ways," said Vernon, "and as I am wet, I don't mind braving the wave once more, especially as my hat is swimming so conveniently for catching, on the water opposite."

He threw off his coat as he spoke, and begging Neville to drag it round for him, leaped as far as he could into the stream, and directed his course primarily to his hat, and finally to the landing-place, which was a few yards distant from his old station.

"How active he is!" remarked Meredith, admiringly, as he watched him climb the bank. He gave them a farewell "Hurrah," and walked rapidly away.

"He's a giddy fellow," said Reginald: "I never knew any one laugh as much as he does when he gets in these humors; no one would fancy he could be grave. Frank does not laugh so much as Vernon, though he makes others laugh more."

"It is a good thing for his brain that he can relax so much," said Meredith. "But hush! here's a fine fellow." The two friends sat silently pursuing their sport, while Louis mused or read under a shady beech, whither he had imported a low camp-stool. Half an hour elapsed, when Neville came running up, breathless and furiously heated.

"I can't make out where Vernon is. Which way did he turn? I have been to the house and inquired for him; his coat is dry now, but no one knows any thing of him. I have been running and calling in every direction nearly all this time. What can have become of him?"

"It's queer," said Meredith, looking at Reginald.

"He's big enough to take care of himself," said Reginald.

"What's the matter?" asked Louis. "Vernon lost?"

Neville repeated his story, and exhibited the dry coat.

"But perhaps he got there after you left the house?"

"I have just come from it," replied Neville. "I thought he might be there, and ran back to see, just before I came here."

"There he is!" exclaimed Meredith, pointing across the water. And sure enough there he was, without his coat, running to the water's edge.

"Reginald! Meredith! Louis!" he shouted, "come and look at this machinery. Here's a most interesting saw-mill. It is worth looking at; come round. Oh, Neville! bring my coat, that's a good fellow."

The youths set off, running, and were met at the bridge by Vernon, who laughed at Neville's fruitless search, and led the way down a little hollow to a kind of workshop, where under a roof revolved the circular mill which had charmed him so much. Once again here, and there seemed to be no

getting him away. He exhibited all its points to his friends, and suggested certain improvements to the men; then he wanted to go over the flour-mill adjoining, when Neville accidentally touched him.

"Oh, Vernon, you are quite wet! You have never been to the house."

"No; I have been better employed," replied he.

"You are very wrong," exclaimed Neville: "you will get a terrible cold."

"Pshaw! a wetting hurts no one as long as he keeps in motion. Look here, Reginald, I want to show you this eccentric. It draws the log gradually along across the saw, without the least trouble to the men. You did not expect to find such an invention here. The artist is only a common workman. We must look over the mill; see, Reginald, this gear is attached to the flour-mill: I want to look over that with you."

"You must not, Vernon!" exclaimed Neville, energetically. "Reginald, do not let him; make him come home."

"I am almost dry now," said Vernon, carelessly. "Reginald, I want them to have an hydraulic engine."

"I won't hear any more of hydraulics or hydrostatics, or any other *ics* now," said Reginald. "You must be pleased to come home."

"Immediately. But just see—"

"Vernon, you are very wrong," exclaimed Neville. "It is quite sinful to trifle with your health. You know as well as any one what the consequences of such a wetting may be, though you treat it so lightly. Vernon, do be persuaded to come home, or, at least, to go into the mill-house; but a brisk walk will be the best for you now. It is really too serious: you are trifling with danger, Vernon."

"'Oh, dear discretion! how his words are suited!'"

exclaimed Vernon, laughing.

"'The *boy* hath planted in his memory
An army of good words.'

I cannot withstand such a torrent of eloquence. Come, Reginald, let's go. I shall be dry before we reach home; so much the better; it will save trouble. Come, let us see who will get to the Priory first. We will come and make a survey to-morrow, Reginald. Ah, Reginald! Oh, Neville! You have made me despise my own rule,—'Not to leave till to-morrow what may be done to-day.' Fools look after to-morrow; wise men take care of to-day."

He put on his coat, and, challenging them to a race, they all set off at full speed; and running much, and walking a little, they reached home in an hour. Vernon's persuasiveness, at least, was perhaps owing more to a sense of shivering than to Neville's powers of rhetoric; but he was tolerably warm when they reached the Priory, and all bad effects might have been averted, had he taken care then. He retired to his own room directly, with urgent requests from all that he would immediately change his things, and take care of himself. Mrs. Mortimer, who in vain urged his going at once to bed, went upstairs herself with him, to see that the window was shut, and, in spite of his laughing remonstrances that he was so hot he could hardly breathe, he promised to keep it shut. He did not descend for more than an hour afterwards; but Mrs. Mortimer anxiously noticed his pallid face to him in the course of the evening. She might have noticed more, had she not been much taken up with some little preparations for Louis, who was to set off for Bristol the next morning at half-past four.

CHAPTER III.

"What evil eye can entrance win,
Where guards like these abound?
If chance some heedless heart should roam,
Sure thought of these will lure it home,
Ere lost in Folly's round."
Christian Year.

MEREDITH was so very averse to leaving the care of Mr. Mortimer, that he persuaded his father to make arrangements for him to read for the next six months with Mr. Phillips, preparatory to his matriculating at Cambridge. This arrangement was particularly delightful to him, as Mr. and Mrs. Mortimer were very glad that he should spend all his spare time at the Priory, his affectionate attention to them having won their love, and made them very desirous to strengthen in him every good impression he appeared to have received while with them. It must be confessed that, though Louis had arrived at the mature age of sixteen, he felt more than usually lonely at leaving home this time. Many of his old friends had left school, and among them his dearest Reginald; and the night travelling did not tend to dissipate the gloom of his spirits as he drew near his journey's end. The coach drew up at the door of a large house by the roadside, a few miles from Bristol, where he was invited to spend the night, in order to accompany one of his schoolfellows back to Dr. Wilkinson's. The coachman had put down his luggage and driven off, and the gate-bell had been rung two or three times, when a servant appeared in great haste, and,

with many apologies for keeping him waiting, ushered him to the house, and throwing open the door of a room on one side of the hall, begged him to walk in, while she went to call another servant to fetch his trunk.

"They hardly seem to expect me," thought Louis, as he scrutinized the room to see what sort of people Salisbury's relations were.

It was not certainly so elegant as Dashwood, being nothing more or less than a lofty square room, of very modern description, with three large sash windows at one side, nearly covered by large muslin curtains. In one, where the drapery had been carelessly pushed aside, stood a small table covered with ladies' work, and surrounded with chairs and stools. On one ottoman lay a couple of dilapidated dolls, and on a large table near Louis a sextant, case of mathematical instruments, and an open work on navigation. The piano was open, and littered with music. Near it, on a low chair, lay a guitar, the long ribbon of which was affording much amusement to a young kitten. Louis was left alone some minutes, and had fully time to discover, from names inscribed on books, and work, and toys, that Frederick Salisbury, his old schoolfellow, owned "Norie's Navigation," and his sisters, Edith, Caroline, and Fanny, the emptied portfolios of music, before his meditations were disturbed by the entrance of the brother, who was to be under his escort the next day. He stood still at the door, looked surprised and shy, and finally began in a low tone, "Oh, 'tisn't Burton:—what an awful mistake Jane made!"

"My name is Mortimer," said Louis advancing.

"Oh, you're Louis Mortimer!" replied the young gentleman, coming up and holding out his hand. "I thought you were coming at eight. You've been kept an awful time by

yourself; we're so awfully busy to-day, what with the packing up and all."

"Where are your brothers?" asked Louis quietly. "They are not packing up, I suppose?"

"Come along, will you, and see. The girls won't let Fred come down, so I've come down to bring you up. They thought it was another fellow; but it's all the same. I dare say they'll say I'm awfully rude, but they'll make it all straight."

Louis was not much impressed by this specimen of his future *protégé;* he followed him quietly upstairs, and on the way made some inquiries respecting one of his brothers, who was now a cadet in India.

Ethelred informed him that John was very "jolly, and all that," "longing for a fight;" and that "mamma was as frightened as any thing." At this juncture they arrived at their journey's end, and opening a bedroom door, the young gentleman shouted out, "Enter Louis Mortimer, Esq."

The bedroom into which Louis entered was littered from one end to the other with trunks, clothes, books, and other *et ceteras*, and on the foot of a bed sat Salisbury, without his coat, playing "The girl I left behind me," very miserably, on a piccolo. A pretty laughing girl of thirteen or fourteen sat beside him, stitching away at something, and two others, whose long curls hid their faces, were kneeling at a trunk in front packing very diligently, while at the further end of the room Charles was calling the names of the articles from a long inventory. Two little girls of about six and seven years old, who were standing at Fred's knee listening with great admiration to his playing, completed the *tableau*. On Louis's entrance Salisbury jumped up and over the trunk in front of him, and welcomed him very heartily.

"Why, it's Louis himself! A great shame to send for you to come to such a place, Louis; but the fact is, the servant announced another friend. A summons came for me yesterday to join my ship to-morrow at Plymouth, and as she's ordered off to China, we've heaps to do. I know, old fellow, you don't stand on trifles, and won't be very angry at Ethelred's rudeness on such an occasion. Look here, these beauties are all frantic if I leave the room for a minute; and so Ethelred was desired to ask Burton, *not you*, to our 'chaos worse confounded' than usual."

"Don't apologize," said Louis. "And are you really going for so long a time? I do not wonder your sisters can hardly spare you."

"And now I must introduce you: there are such lots of them, I shall be lucky if I remember their names right. My friend and schoolfellow, Mr. Louis Mortimer, ladies;" and Salisbury, turned to his laughing, blushing sisters, who had risen on Louis's entrance, "Misses Caroline and Elizabeth Salisbury, the best packers in Christendom: Miss Fanny, the girl what doesn't mind a brotherly thump sometimes, when her old Fred's afflicted with an accumulation of sensorial power, as the books say; and here," he continued, lifting one of the little ones, "are Kate and Marianne; I don't know of what use they are, except to leave their toys about, and get the brothers the credit of breaking them. They know we don't care about them a bit."

"But you do, though," said the little one, squeezing his face between her hands.

"*Do, though*, indeed! But, my dear fellow, you are hungry, or tired, or something."

"Rather tired, but not hungry," replied Louis; "and not too tired to enjoy seeing you among your kind sisters, whom

I hope I shall know better soon. I have only one, you know; but I love her well enough to understand how rich you are in five times the number."

"Five!—you haven't seen half of them yet."

"Oh, Fred!" exclaimed Fanny, laughing.

"Half!—no, he hasn't. Do you suppose, little ladies, that all of you together are equal to the '*Swan's Neck?*' Here she comes! my eldest sister Edith, called SWAN'S NECK for her beauty."

"Really, Fred, you are taking advantage of your license to-day, I think," said the last-mentioned young lady, who entered with her mother at the moment.

"My mother, Mortimer. There isn't a mother of them all can come to mine; not even yours, Mortimer."

"At any rate," replied Mrs. Salisbury, "Mrs. Mortimer would, I am sure, wish you to think so; but we will excuse her son from being obliged to hold the same opinion. My dear Mr. Mortimer, I am quite ashamed of the welcome you have received, in return for your kindness in coming to take charge of my boy. I have only just heard that you were here, and should not have imagined my young people would have brought you up tired to this uncomfortable room."

"I was just asking him if he was tired, mamma," said Fred.

"We need ask no questions, I think," replied his mother, shaking her head, and, leading Louis out of the room, she showed him into another neatly arranged for his use; and after assuring herself that his luggage was up, left him to make his preparations for tea.

Our friend Louis, as we know of old, not being of a very boisterous turn, was not sorry to rest a few minutes in peace after his long journey, though he had been both amused and interested by his introduction to his friend's family, which

Reginald had always lauded as the most pleasant possible for holiday time. Before very long, a gentle tap at the door preluded the announcement that tea was quite ready; and, on opening the door, Louis found Fanny and a little brother waiting to show him the way down.

Fanny led the way rather shyly, and just as they reached the hall, said, "I am afraid you will think us all very rude; but we did not expect you quite so soon. You did not come by the London coach, I think?"

"No, I did not," replied Louis; "I came from Gloucester."

"The London coach does not come in till eight; and we thought all our packing would be done by that time. Jane announced an intimate friend of the boys, who lives quite close, and comes in very often. If we had known who it was, we should not have asked you to come up, at least not till you were rested."

Her little merry face looked so apologetic, that Louis felt quite sorry for her.

"You must not think any more of it," said he, as he made way for her to enter the dining-room: "your brothers are old friends of mine, and we should never stand on ceremony with each other. I never like being treated as a stranger, Miss Fanny."

When Louis arrived in the dining-room, he found the table covered with a white cloth, and laid out most hospitably with tea, fruit, eggs, and cold meat. The large bow window was wide open, and the two little girls were seated there at a little table, a place being reserved there for Fanny's companion. Fred's father, a fine portly-looking gentleman, as benevolent and prepossessing in appearance as his mother, came forward, and shaking Louis by both hands, welcomed him to his house.

"I am afraid you must want dinner, Mr. Mortimer," said Mrs. Salisbury. "We were so confidently assured by our boys that you would come by the London coach, or we would have suited our dinner hour to you."

Louis assured her again and again that ample dinner was provided for his wants, and presently did justice to the cheer before him. His gentleness and sweetness of manner prepossessed all the party immediately in his favor, and nothing could exceed the attention paid to his wants by the greater part of the family, though it was very evident that there was one overpowering consideration present with them all, that now and then checked the determination to be merry.

"We feel it exceedingly kind of you, Mr. Mortimer," said Mrs. Salisbury, "to promise to look after our poor little boy. He has been so delicate, poor little fellow, that I am afraid he is now hardly fit for school; but really, I suppose it is time he went."

"High time," said the father. "The fact is, Mr. Mortimer, he is a spoilt boy, and if Dr. Wilkinson can unspoil him, he will do a good deed. That's the way we parents always do: we spoil our children, and then leave the master to mend them for us. Rather hard upon the masters, I think."

"I think so too, when it is the case," said Louis, smiling.

When tea was over, the elder ones withdrew to the drawing-room to have some music, by Fred's especial request. Mrs. Salisbury made a place for Louis on the sofa, and her dear eldest boy drew a low ottoman near her, and seating himself thereon, leaned his head on her shoulder, and called from time to time for his favorite ditties and airs, varying his employment by kissing his mother's hand, which he held in his. Little Fanny, who seemed to be a very particular favorite of his, sat near him hemming a handkerchief, and

was called on for one or two very simple songs, without accompaniment.

"Doesn't she sing well, Mortimer? Hasn't she got a nice little voice of her own?"

"Very," replied Louis.

"You forget how well you always told us Mr. Mortimer sings, Fred," said Fanny.

"No. By the by, Mortimer, do sing something."

"Not to night," replied Louis, smiling. "There are some much sweeter songs to be heard by you to-night."

"By the by," exclaimed Salisbury, "there's 'Norie,' and all those things not packed up, and which of you beauties will sew me a button on my glove?"

Fanny seized on the glove, and ran lightly away with the things he mentioned, presently followed by her eldest sister.

"She's such a little handy thing," said Salisbury; "I'll be bound she's got them all in before the Swan's Neck gets upstairs. Little Fan, she has always a smile and a needle and thread—eh, mother?"

"We must not talk of her perfections," said his mother, smiling.

Salisbury was at last constrained to attempt a song himself, and he got pretty well through a rather roaring version of "Blow high, blow low," till the middle of the second verse, when he fairly broke down, and hastily resumed his seat by his mother.

"How now, Fred?" said his father kindly.

"What's the row, Fred?" exclaimed Charles; "you haven't finished it."

"You are good little creatures to sing so much for me," said Fred, with an attempt to be gay. "I know a fellow

can't sing very well with a lump in his throat. I'll just go and see what Fan's about."

As the evening wore on, the spirits of the party flagged, and Salisbury at length hardly spoke at all. Louis retired to bed before prayers; and believing him to be tired, no one pressed him to stay longer: yet it was more than an hour before the family separated; for there were many things to say that night of their first long separation, that none but family ears should hear, and grief that none but each other's hearts could share. We will not lift the veil; there are some things too sacred to be touched. That last night would never be forgotten by the sailor boy; nor will he ever care to do that which should bring a pang to the kind hearts of those dear ones who think so fondly and proudly of him in his childhood's home.

Fred left home with his father the next day, by the coach that took Louis and Ethelred to Dr. Wilkinson's, and the two latter were set down safely at the White Lion early in the afternoon, and not long after were on their way to Ashfield House.

CHAPTER IV.

"My soul hangeth on Thee; Thy right hand upholdeth me."—Ps. lxiii. 9 (Prayer-Book version).

"He that feareth the Lord will do good."—Ecclesiasticus.

When Louis had got beyond Clifton he dismounted, with his young charge, both preferring to walk the remainder of the distance, as Ethelred was anxious to see as much as possible of the neighborhood of his school. It was a lovely, warm day, and the beauty of the surrounding scenery closed Louis's lips for a time, while his heart was the more open to the bounteous Maker of all. Thoughts of all past goodness, of the care that had been over him since he first learned to love the Lord, and more especially since he had been at school, rushed through his mind. He wondered why so much love was shown to him. "Why me? why me? so weak, so faithless, so doubting. I will extol Thee, my God, oh King, and I will praise Thy name for ever and ever; for Thou hast magnified Thy word and Thy name above all things. In the day when I cried Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul! And will He not still be with me? I will trust, and not be afraid." He remembered how fearful he had been when Hamilton had left him, but still he had been upheld and enabled to walk holily before men; now he was still more alone. Reginald, who always took his part, who was ridicule proof, was no longer with him to fight his battles, and to stand by him with his straightforward advice and ready sympathy. Louis could hardly persuade himself that he was growing so old,

and was now one of the oldest in the school, and should lead instead of being led.

"How gently have I been guided, oh my Father!" he thought. "Hitherto hast Thou helped me; and how gradually am I taught to go, taking me by my arms. Surely Thou hast led me with cords of love. Hold me by Thy right hand; never leave nor forsake me, but perfect that which concerneth me, and enable me to walk before Thee with a perfect heart." Then his thoughts went back to his late confirmation, and he was thinking how much more decidedly he should stand forth as a soldier of Christ, now he had made this public profession, when little Ethelred said:

"How silent you are, Mr. Mortimer! are you tired or sorry?"

"Neither; only silent," replied Louis.

"Your eyes seem to be full of tears," said Ethelred; "I thought you were thinking of home."

"But not sorrowfully," said Louis.

"Well, I don't know how you can think of it now and not be sorrowful; I can scarcely keep from crying, especially when I think of Fred going."

"Poor boy," said Louis kindly. "But you should try to think of home happily and thankfully, Ethelred."

"How?" asked Ethelred. "I don't know how a fellow can. Were you not wishing to be at home just then?"

Louis smiled.

"There is no harm in a little of that," he replied; "though I was not exactly wishing to be at home just then."

"But would you not go home if you might?"

"Perhaps I do not know what is best for me, Ethelred, and so it is a very happy thing I am not left to choose. I think school has been, with God's blessing, of a great deal of

use to me, and I hope it will be to you. You know we hope to be men some day, and must go out among men, and we must learn, while boys, how men should act; and so it is better to learn something of that by degrees among those who will be men with us. I am sure it is best, though I love home so dearly. I was thinking just now how many things I had to thank God for, and how glad I ought to be that He is so gracious as to direct my way for me, instead of leaving me to choose it for myself."

Ethelred looked up very gravely at his companion, and then added:

"Are the boys at all like you, Mr. Mortimer?"

"You will be able to judge for yourself soon," replied Louis. "But now I will tell you how I want you to think happily and thankfully of home. You must try to thank God that He has given you so happy a home, and so many dear brothers and sisters, and such kind parents, and pray that you may *never*, *never* do any thing at school that may cause them a moment's pain. The half-year will soon slip by, and how delightful it will be to take home a good character, more information, and perhaps a prize. Your papa and mamma wish you to improve, and you will not disappoint them, will you?"

"No, I'll try," replied Ethelred, squeezing Louis's hand very hard. "Will you help me, Mr. Mortimer?"

"As much as I can. I want you to show the others how you can serve God in diligence and good behavior."

"I am sure I shall be good, if all the boys are like you," he replied.

"You must not expect them to care so much for you as I do: each one has his own particular friend."

"And may I be yours, Mr. Mortimer?"

"You may be one of mine," said Louis.

"I am sure you are very kind," said the little boy. "How long is it before we get to Dr. Wilkinson's? are we near?"

"There is the house," said Louis. "That large gray building among the trees."

Ethelred looked at it with a kind of awe-struck interest.

"It's a prettier house than I thought; and where is the playground, and which side is the school-room?"

"The school-room is behind; and the playground is behind, and before, and sideways, and every way."

"What, that beautiful park, Mr. Mortimer?"

"Yes. It does not look a very dismal place, does it?"

"Oh no, it's capital! There's plenty of room for play."

"And plenty of room for lessons too within," said Louis.

"Oh! I suppose we shall have an awful lot of them; I'm awfully afraid of that."

"There is nothing to excite so much awe," replied Louis. "I fancy your fear and the lessons are about equally matched, as you say."

"What?" said Ethelred.

"There is nothing very *awful* in either. For my part, I never met with any thing *awful* in lessons, nor do I think I ever felt *awfully* afraid; and I do not think you do either, if you consider about it."

"Now, Mr. Mortimer, that's just what mamma says."

"Then think of it the more."

"There's our fly going in at the gate."

"And we shall not be very long after it," said Louis, as he stooped to unfasten a little wicket at the side of the park. "Oh, it's fastened; but we can climb over."

Accordingly he climbed over, assisted Ethelred, and by a short cut across the ground reached the hall-door at the same

time with the fly, paid the man, dismissed him, and then led his little charge into the school-room. It was about three o'clock, consequently all were in full work, yet many near the door broke out of bounds to greet Louis as he entered, and one grave-looking, well-grown boy of twelve years old, bolder than the others, fairly threw himself into his arms, "Oh Louis! I was afraid you were not coming back."

"Sit down, Hamilton," cried the nearest usher.

"It's Louis Mortimer, sir," said Alfred, as he obeyed the command.

Louis paid his respects to each master in succession; and it was pleasant to watch the welcome faces wherever he turned. One or two inquiries were made about Ethelred, and the masters generally said a kind word to him for his brother's sake.

As Louis passed up the school-room, on his way to the study, where he found the doctor was, he came to a familiar row of ink-stained desks, at one end of which sat a boy of fourteen, with a slate and book before him. Both his elbows were on the desk, and his fingers were shoved among the roots of his hair, while his abstracted, absorbed study of the subject before him provoked a pleasant-looking young man on the opposite side, who ought to have been similarly occupied, into sketching the tempting attitude on his slate for the benefit of his next neighbor, with whom he was holding an under-current of conversation more amusing than profitable. The head of hair and the round shoulders would have identified Charles Clifton anywhere; and Louis roused him from his studies by seizing both wrists, and pulling him back with a gentle force. It was a minute before Charles appeared to understand the meaning of the interruption, and then he got up and shook hands.

"I am very glad to see you."

"And how has the world wagged with your ladyship since we met last?" said the artist, rising and shaking hands across the desk. "I've taken the rise out of you this half, however, Mr. Louis. The bottom of the class to your ladyship. Is that little Salisbury? How is it you come so late, sir? The doctor has been so angry that you didn't come the first day."

"Frank, Frank!" said Louis, laughing.

"Well, how are Vernon, Reginald, Salisbury, and all the rest?"

"I must tell you that after school," replied Louis, "for Mr. Danby looks as if I were disturbing decorum; and, besides, I ought to go in to the doctor."

"Hear him!" said Frank. "I dare say Fudge has forgotten your existence."

"I flatter myself he has not."

"'Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,' Lady Louisa. Sit down; I dare say he can wait five minutes."

Louis only replied by a low bow, and a retreat to the class-room.

I have so often elsewhere detailed interviews with the respected head master of Ashfield House, that a repetition may be tedious. It will answer our end to say that Ethelred Salisbury was duly presented to and examined by Dr. Wilkinson that afternoon, and placed in the lowest class, where he had the felicity of doing two or three sums with a great deal of help, and looked about for the rest of the time till *tempus ludendi* was proclaimed.

When this welcome period arrived, Louis, Clifton, and Frank, with one or two others, congregated in the play-ground to discuss the events of the holidays. There were

Louis, Clifton, and Frank, with one or two others, congregated in the play-ground.—p. 48.

many expressions of regret that Reginald and Meredith had not returned, and many inquiries about Vernon, whose collegiate fame was known to many at Dr. Wilkinson's.

"And so Meredith is going to read at Dashwood?—he's a happy fellow," said Frank. "I only wish I were going somewhere. I wanted very much to persuade my father to that step, but he was unpersuadable. They always seem so glad to get rid of me. However, one thing is agreeably decided, that I leave school at Michaelmas, and matriculate in October at Trinity."

"Oxford or Cambridge?" asked one.

"As if there could be any doubt," answered Frank, contemptuously. "Do you think I should patronize Oxford at all? and nothing less than Christ Church there, if you please. No, Cambridge, man, which my father and my father's father honored before me."

"I suppose you mean to rival Vernon?" said one.

"That remains to be seen. One such luminary is enough for the family honor. I am looking forward to a little ease and rest after the fatigues of school. Don't you think that fair, Louis?"

"I am beginning to be of opinion that we are not intended to rest in this life," answered Louis; "and I do not think we are any the happier for it either."

"'On, Frankie, on! is the last cry of Louis.' Oh, insatiable model of perseverance and morality! Do you know where Hamilton is now?"

"He and Trevannion are somewhere in the Isle of Wight. Hamilton does not seem to be doing very much at Oxford."

"Leave him alone," said Frank. "Hamilton is not an intuitive genius; he is rather a slow coach, but a very sure one. He will come in first, and be in no danger of an upset

all the way through. He knows what he knows, and that's more than we flighty ones can say. He will make a capital barrister."

"He will," said another. "He is so clear-headed, and has such a cool manner of his own."

"As for Trevannion," continued Frank, "he's an ass; and it's well for him he's of a good family,—that is to say, if he wants to get any thing. He is founder's kin somewhere. I pity the poor flock who will have the misfortune to own his tender care. He'd lead them into the lion's den, going first himself, because he knows no better; and, what's more, he's so weak and so pig-headed, he will never be any better."

"Don't say that, Frank," said Louis, gravely. "He may, indeed, and I trust he will."

"Mortimer, have you heard about Ferrers?" asked one of the party.

Louis answered in the negative.

"Then there's a piece of news for you," said Frank "When we next go into Bristol, we will pay him a visit."

"He lost his father about a twelvemonth ago," said the first speaker, "and it appears he was greatly involved, and left him nothing. An uncle or cousin has had pity on him, and has apprenticed him to a stationer in Wine-street, telling him, as I understand, that he can't think of indulging his fine gentlemanly notions—that beggars mustn't be choosers."

"There, then," said Frank.

"Pride has had a fall," said another. "No one can pity him much."

"Poor fellow!" said Louis; "is it not enough to be alone in the world, poor fellow?"

"It is a just punishment for him," said the informer.

"A just punishment, Williams?" said Louis, turning

round, and speaking very gravely. "'Thinkest thou, that they on whom the tower of Siloam fell were sinners above all others?' If we talk of *just punishment*, what do we deserve?"

"Ay," said Frank, "'if every man had his deserts, who shall escape whipping?'—*Shakspeare, hem!* I did feel as sorry for him as I could, but he was such a churl."

"Perhaps," said Williams, "he'll know how to be civil now."

"Perhaps, so far from a judgment, it may be for good to him," said Louis. "Have you been to see him, Frank?"

"He has helped me to a packet of envelopes."

"Is that all?" said Louis, earnestly.

"All!" replied Frank; "did you think I meant to lower myself by companionship with a stationer's apprentice?"

"I do not think you would lower yourself by speaking to him," said Louis.

"*Chacun à son gout*," answered Frank. "He may be well enough; I can't help his condition, nor he neither, but it places a bar between us, and he never was a friend of mine. Were you or Hamilton placed in such a predicament, the case would be materially altered."

Louis was going to ask Ferrer's direction, when the conversation was interrupted by a group of little boys, among whom were Ethelred Salisbury and Alfred Hamilton. The former, with a very red face, was loudly declaiming against the injustice of some assertion, apparently made by one or all of the little party round him, and by his indignant gestures of course only laid himself more open to his tormentors.

"How now, Ethelred!" exclaimed Louis. "What's the matter?"

"The boys are teasing me!" exclaimed Alfred, tauntingly

"Alfred!" said Louis, "I am both surprised and ashamed."

"Why, Louis? All boys must be teased when they come to school, and I've heard you say—"

"What's the matter, Ethelred?" asked Louis, cutting short Alfred's speech, and drawing Ethelred away.

The child seemed struggling with a determination not to cry. He bit his lips very hard, and clenched his hands, and it was not until Louis had repeated his question, at a little distance from the others, that he answered—

"Alfred says I can't add three and four! but I *can*, and it's all a lie."

"Ho! ho!" cried Frank. "Orlando Furioso!"

Louis looked beseechingly at Frank, and undoing the little hand, put it between his own, and patted it, while he answered, with a mixture of sweetness and gravity, "You must prove to them it is not true, Ethelred. Have you been doing any sums this afternoon?"

"Yes; I have had some very hard sums, and I couldn't do them very well; they forget I've never been at school before. They were awfully hard, Mr. Mortimer."

"Given," said Frank, "the distance between the playground wall and the garden gate, to find the length of Dr. Wilkinson's desk in inches; that was it, wasn't it?"

Ethelred looked up puzzled.

"Was not that the question?"

"No, sir," he replied sulkily.

"Oh! this was it, I dare say. If I pay four and sixpence for a silk pocket-handkerchief, how much do your shoes cost?"

Ethelred looked again at Frank, and then burst out laughing.

"Ah, I see; you can't add three and four," said Frank.

Louis laughed too, and then said, "Don't you think it is much better to laugh about these things than to get in a passion?"

Ethelred hung his head.

"Come."

"Only I can't help it, because it is not true, and nobody takes my part but you; and I'm sure, Mr. Mortimer, if you had been so teased when you came to school, you would have minded it."

"*Argumentum ad hominem*," said one of them.

"But powerless here," said Frank, "as Louis was the most patient and good-humored of all teased mortals on a similar occasion."

"I don't think I was ever very cross about teasing," said Louis, kindly. "Perhaps I did not mind it so much as you do; but when the boys see it teases you, they are encouraged to go on. The best way is to take no notice of it;—laugh too."

"But I don't like them to say I don't know how to add."

"Then get on fast, and get into another class, and show that you are able to do as well as any one. Get before some of them; they won't laugh at you then."

Ethelred's eyes sparkled.

"I will try, Mr. Mortimer. I will show them I'm as clever as they are, with all their boasting; and then I can tease too."

"Bravo!" said Frank. "I am glad to see you have such an amiable spirit of your own, Master Ethelred."

Ethelred looked doubtfully at Frank, and then at Louis, who was looking very gravely at him.

"Are you angry, Mr. Mortimer?"

"Are you right, Ethelred? I should hope, when you

have the power to tease, you will remember how painful you found it to be teased, and not like to give another the same pain."

Ethelred colored furiously, and looked rather angry; but Louis said no more to him, and the tea-bell ringing, he hurried with his friends towards the house. Ethelred walked very silently by him till they entered. When the party separated, he pulled Louis aside, and whispered, "I will think of what you said, Mr. Mortimer. I will try to be kind."

Louis smiled, and laid his hand on the little boy's head.

The study, or class-room, before mentioned, was soon filled by the two first classes when tea was over. After Louis had ascertained what his own duties were for the next day, he went into the school-room to look after his *protégés*. He had soon a busy little class round him, and was able to be of signal service to poor Ethelred, who was in a state of mystification respecting the different lessons required of him. Missing one of his applicants, Louis looked round the room, and presently discovered Alfred Hamilton not far from him with a copy of Xenophon before him, busily engaged in making paper-bellows, and endeavoring to blow out the candle, with the most hopelessly idle expression on his countenance. As soon as he had set his pupils to work, Louis walked up to Alfred, and, looking over his shoulder, asked him how long he had been engaged at this lesson.

"Oh, I don't know."

"Have you done any thing else this evening?"

"No."

"And how much have you to do?—and how much have you done?"

Alfred laughed, and snatched the book from his friend, who had taken hold of it.

"You ask such a heap of questions, Louis."

"But how much?"

"As much again as half."

"And how much is half, if it is not too impertinent a question?"

"The quarter multiplied by two."

Louis colored, and nearly turned away; but he remembered Hamilton, and his own determination not to act to any boy as others had acted to him when he needed patience and kindness to his errors.

"Alfred," he said, seriously, "I suppose you have done nothing, and that has made you dissatisfied with yourself, and impertinent to me. I am afraid this day has been a wrong day altogether. If you wish me to leave you alone to-night I will; but I warn you, that if you are not industrious for the rest of the evening, you will be in disgrace to-morrow. If you want any assistance, I shall be ready to give it when you ask for it."

Alfred caught hold of his coat as he turned away.

"Don't be angry, Louis. I have only done one line, and that's the sum *tottle*." He gave another puff with his last pair of bellows, and then, putting them all into Louis' hands, said,—"There, I'll make you a present of them,—ἐξελαύνει, —oh, this beastly stuff! I really never can do it. What's the use of knowing how many *hoplites* there were, and how many demons guarded each city? I think Greek was invented to make boys miserable."

"Oh, Alfred! how can you be such a baby!"

"It's all very well for a scholar like you to talk."

"And how do you suppose I became a scholar,—by kicking my legs about, and dog's-earing my books?"

"Yes, of course."

"Give me your book, and let me see what you can do."

Alfred groaned, sighed, kicked the form, put his elbows on the desk, laid his head thereon, and a few minutes after finally shoved himself as far as possible on the form, and, poking his head under the desk, grunted out a line and a half, concluding with,—"We never get a bit of play now, Louis. When will you play the judge again?"

"Not on Saturday night, when you have less time than usual. Come, Alfred, what's the next? Now do lift up your head, and look at the book."

"I never can be industrious at classics, they are such beastly stuff. Now, mathematics,—I don't mind how long I am about them."

"I think you don't mind how long you are about Greek either," said Louis, "or you would have done this long ago."

"Oh!" groaned Alfred again, and down went his head again under the desk. "It's too bad of Mr. Norton to set us such hard lessons. Now, Louis, you are too particular; let me rest myself a minute; you're always at me so."

Louis got the head up again, and, with the most exemplary patience, brought Master Alfred safely through three more lines before the little boys were summoned to bed, and by dint of great exertions, he accomplished another three before the time arrived when he knew the younger ones would be in bed, when he ran up stairs to fulfil a previous promise of telling them a little story, after they were in bed. As he came down stairs, he met the second division going to bed, and among them was Alfred Hamilton.

"Oh, Louis! good night; I've been wishing I was a little boy, that I might have been up stairs with you. I see I have tired you to-night, haven't I, Louis? Haven't I? now do say."

"Never mind that now, Alfred; think over it all by yourself."

"I know I have; I'm a bad fellow, Louis. I could fling my own books at my head, Louis. I *will* do better. I will be more kind to Ethelred; indeed, I was sorry."

Louis shook hands very warmly, and whispered a few words of advice to him, and dashing his hand across his eyes, Alfred ran up stairs. To his great delight, Louis found, on retiring to rest, that Hamilton's old room was now to be his, and it was directly arranged in his own mind that Alfred and Ethelred should come to him every morning, as Alfred had been in the habit of doing with his brother. His heart went up in thankfulness to his heavenly Father, who had provided this quiet retreat for him; and soothed by silent meditation after the excitement of the day, he fell asleep, while breathing prayers for all the dear ones at home.

CHAPTER V.

"In the bosom joy and grief
Ever cling together;
Calm and tempest, pain and pleasure,
Days of trouble, hours of leisure,
Come like April weather.

"Where a shower falls to-day,
Flowers may bloom to-morrow
In the cottage, in the palace,
Sweet and bitter fill the chalice,—
Mirth is twin'd with sorrow.

"Trust to Him who hangs the bow
On the shower's glancing;
If we firmly bear our sadness,
He will turn our grief to gladness,
In the days advancing."

Mendelssohn's Part-Song.

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient. All things are lawful, but I will not be brought under the power of any."—1 Cor. vi. 12.

All Louis's warmth and generous sympathy had been roused by the account of poor Ferrers, and he had determined to pay him a visit at the earliest opportunity. Nearly a fortnight elapsed, however, before the opportunity arrived. About this time Louis received a letter from Reginald giving a detailed account of all home doings, and more particularly of the dangerous illness of Vernon.

"You remember," said Reginald, "his slipping into the mill-pond the day before you left us, and how much we laughed. Ah! Louis, how near smiles and tears are! We do not know what we laugh at. Well, you remember how

obstinate Vernon was about hurrying home, and it seems now that, even after all, he actually sat in his wet clothes three quarters of an hour, writing two notes, for fear of being too late for the post. The consequence was, that the next day he had a tremendous cold on his chest, with fever and shivering, which terminated in violent inflammation of the lungs. He says he felt burning hot in the night, and got up and opened the window and sat by it till he had a shivering fit, when he got into bed again. I cannot tell you how very anxious we have been; Uncle and Aunt Digby have been here. At one time no one expected he would get over it; but thank God, thank God, Louis, with us, he is now recovering rapidly, and Dr. S—— says, with God's blessing and care, will do well. Poor Uncle Frank, I never saw any thing like his anguish when it was thought Vernon must die. Oh! how sad it is that he has no religion to comfort him! Vernon is serious, and seems very thankful for his recovery; he was too ill for much reflection, Louis, but I hope he will never forget this time. Meredith has been so kind and thoughtful. He has tried to make up for you (indeed we wanted you): I am sure his prayers have been with us. Vernon is to go for a cruise on the Mediterranean as soon as he is strong enough. Uncle Clarence has promised his yacht, and George Vernon, Neville, and I, accompany him. I wish you were to be one of the party."

There was much in this long letter that made Louis both thoughtful and thankful, though his cousin Frank remarked alternately upon the improper manner in which he had been treated, in not hearing sooner of his brother's illness, and the good thing it was he had been spared the anxiety the news would have excited earlier. Louis was much pleased with the chastened tone of his brother's letter, and now the danger

was over, he was glad, like Frank, that he had been kept in ignorance.

Two days after this came a half-holiday, and Louis obtained permission to take Alfred and Ethelred to Bristol. The long walk was pleasantly beguiled by one of Louis's inexhaustible stories, and when they reached Wine-street, Louis left his companions in a toy-shop, to choose any thing they liked, and went back to a stationer's they had passed. He stepped in rather hesitatingly. To his great satisfaction there was only one person in the shop, and in him he immediately recognized his *quondam* schoolfellow, as he was very little grown, and still bore the old expression of sullen indifference. He did not appear to recognize Louis, and replied to his demand for some writing paper by bringing down from a shelf a packet of the required article, and placing it on the counter with a dogged expression of apathy, untied it without a word.

"This will do; what is it a quire?" asked Louis.

"Ninepence," replied Ferrers.

"I'll have two quires, if you please."

The two quires were laid aside in the same manner, the rest of the paper fastened up, and Louis's purchase made up, and handed to him as if the apprentice, instead of a human being, were a machine made for putting away and tying up parcels; Louis drew out his purse, and as he laid the money on the counter, looked steadily at him.

"Ferrers, have you forgotten me?"

A deep crimson blush answered in the negative, but there was no further reply.

"I came to see you."

"That you might look down upon me."

It was now Louis's turn to color, but he replied gently, as he held out his hand:

He stepped in rather hesitatingly.—p. 60.

"I know you do not think so, Ferrers; why should I? why should any one look down on you? I think you are the one who looks down. Are you too proud to shake hands with an old schoolfellow?"

Ferrers took Louis's hand as though he would have let it fall.

"You have had much sorrow, Ferrers; I have been very grieved to hear of it; I cannot tell you how much I feel for you. It is very mysterious why we are so dealt with; why one is spared and another laden."

Just then another customer entered, and from the opposite side of the shop the master, observing a young gentleman in conversation with his apprentice, begged him to step inside, and desiring Ferrers to take him to the back-parlor, he attended himself to the shop. Here they were in privacy, but as Ferrers still retained his stolidity, Louis felt a little awkwardness in pursuing the subject he had at heart.

"I know it is very easy for us to talk to one another of resignation," he said again; "however much we may sympathize we cannot understand another's bitterness. Resignation is what God gives in His own good time, dear Ferrers; we are allowed to weep, and to weep with one another, for Jesus wept."

Louis's affectionate eyes were full of emotion, but Ferrers saw them not, though he heard the quivering tone of his voice: he replied sullenly:

"I don't want any one's sympathy—I am enough for myself."

"No one is that, Ferrers: I am sure you do want sympathy. It is that very want that makes you spurn it when it is offered."

"I don't want it from you, then," he replied, in a softened voice.

"And why not from me?"

There was a pause.

"Because you will not believe me sincere?"

"I don't believe you come to carry the tale of what the apprentice is doing, and how he looks. I know *you* are above that; but I cannot bear that you, above all, should think about me and feel for me. You had better go and forget all about me: I shall do; things never went too straight with me."

"I cannot go till you look more brightly on things," replied Louis. "Come, Ferrers, if school-boys are always to harp upon by-gones what would become of us all? You must not look so darkly upon your sorrows; it is not resignation to be callous. Perhaps you do not know how much love there may be in this weight of sorrow; I know it is a weight."

"Love," repeated Ferrers. "Cast out of my position—" he murmured something which Louis could not catch.

"The Lord casteth down and raiseth up, Ferrers; do not close your heart, but pray that God will work His own great work in this affliction: when that is done He may raise you up again; He can. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted. He can find you friends and means too. Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart. Will you not come and see me at Ashfield? I have Hamilton's room now, and I am sure Dr. Wilkinson will allow me to see you there. Do you continue your studies now?"

"What would be the use? I see none."

"What use did you intend them to be? Is it not a pity to let your talents lie fallow?"

"Where would be the good, when I am debarred from entering the university?"

"But is that the only end of study?" asked Louis. "Is there no pleasure in it for its own sake; no advantage from it but such as can be gained through college? I need not remind you of the many other callings it fits us for; I know you better, Ferrers; it will do you good in strengthening your mind. Besides, how can you say that there never will be any opening for you in Oxford? how many poor men get in there! Fit yourself and try for a scholarship, and I think there are some societies here for sending men to the universities."

"Ay, for the Church; and, bad as I am, I would not be a clergyman for mere gain."

"Oh no, to be sure not!" exclaimed Louis warmly. "You may thank God He gives you this feeling; but try, hope on —as we say at school, '*never say die;*'—you have not tried how many shots there are in the locker yet."

A slight smile passed over Ferrers' face.

"Hope was the last thing which left Pandora's box, Louis," he said.

"So it was," answered Louis. "We don't hear that it ever left it; and, dear Ferrers, is it not wrong to give up hope as long as God gives us health, and talents, and strength? I want you to look up to HIM."

Ferrers sat down and leaned his head on the table.

"Oh, Louis!" he said, "my father said *look to Him;* I believe he did himself. Oh, Louis, he was such a father! too good for me. Very unfortunate, very unfortunate." He could hardly articulate the last words. Louis's hand was kindly laid on his arm, and Ferrers did not repulse him this time.

"I have deserved it all. I was not to him what I ought to have been—my only friend; but I *could* say, 'my punishment *is* greater than I can bear.'"

"You must not think so," said Louis. "God is love, trust Him; He is light, look at Him, and He will lighten you; He will rise on you with healing in His wings. I have prayed, and I trust I shall pray for you; but you must pray for yourself. Now, will you come and see me? Promise you will."

"I have little time," said Ferrers.

"Enough for that sometimes, have you not?"

"Perhaps."

"Promise then, God willing, that you will come."

"I will try."

"Thank you; now I must bid you good-by, for I have Alfred Hamilton and Ethelred Salisbury waiting for me at the toy-shop (Fred Salisbury's youngest brother but one)."

"Thank you, Louis," said Ferrers, rising; "I think you are what I always thought you—nearly an angel."

"Hush."

"May your God bless you, and—may He be my God also."

"Amen," said Louis, and they pressed each other's hands.

Louis returned to his charge.

"What a long time you have been, Louis!" exclaimed Alfred; "I was coming to look after you."

"It seemed long to you, I suppose, because you were ready; well, have you made your choice?"

"I should like this paint-box," said Alfred; "and Salisbury wants a pencil-case."

"Very well; now Ethelred, choose one of these three," said Louis, selecting three from the heap before him.

"May I really have one? I thought it would be too much money."

"Alfred's not so modest," said Louis, laughing.

"To be sure not; what's the use of being told to choose

what you like, if you choose something you don't like; I told Ethelred you'd heaps of money."

"Not exactly *heaps*," replied Louis, "but enough for your wants to-day. Now we must go; I have to call at another place as we go home. Have you made your choice, Ethelred?"

The purchases were paid for, and they left the shop. They were rather late when the last errand was done, and made up for lost time by running races over the downs, and by this means reached home just in time for tea.

As Louis took his place at the tea-table, Frank handed him a little note.

"*Ouvrez, ouvrez vite!* I have been on the stilts of curiosity the last hour. A liveried Mercury on horseback left it at the door an hour ago, and it is such a dainty little perfumed billet as Trevannion would have rejoiced to touch; it would not have defiled even his white hands."

Louis opened it with some curiosity.

"It is a note from Mrs. Fraser inviting you and me to a musical party, Frank, on Tuesday."

"Mrs. Fraser forever!" exclaimed Frank; "she's worth her weight in bank notes, a diamond of the first water, Louis, eh? I think, however, considering that I am the senior of the two cousins, the letter ought to have been addressed to me. Of course, you will return a dainty answer to-night."

"I don't think I can get it sent to-night, it is too late and too far."

"To-morrow, then;—oh, botheration! Fudge is so particular about Sunday notes."

"I dare say Monday will be quite soon enough for Mrs. Fraser," said Louis. "Our going or not going is not a matter of such vast importance to her."

"I know better," said Frank; "she's depending upon us for

basses, or tenors, or something of the kind; and if it were not particularly convenient to me to be accommodating enough to give myself a change, I shouldn't go. Besides, tall and engaging young men are always at a premium at parties."

"But not hobbledehoys, Frank."

"Speak for yourself, my friend,—speak for yourself," cried Frank; "I consider myself a man, and, having worn tails and stickups for two or three years, feel entitled to be considered so by others. In a few weeks I shall be a university man; who talks of hobbledehoys there, Mr. Louis?"

"Well, I beg your pardon, I am sorry I offended your dignity," replied Louis. "We'll suppose you a man for argument's sake, as you say, and that you intend to give Mrs. Fraser the felicity of seeing you, to sing Italian trios, &c.; and I may write to that purport?"

"Assuredly, for they give an excellent spread, and there is a passable reunion,—materials for a little amusement. Now you have done, let us descend and talk,—as the ladies do directly they receive an invitation,—about what we shall wear. I think, Louis," he added, as he hooked his arm into his cousin's, "I shall wear my second-best black trowsers,—my best are unfortunately short,—and, let me see, my sprigged white waistcoat. Do you think that's good enough?—and the coat—oh, ought I to order one? Mine has no satin lining; I can't possibly go without a satin lining. It is such fun to hear mamma and Charlotte discussing the proprieties, when a card of invitation comes. Well, now, after such confidence, what have you to say?"

"Suppose I am not going?" said Louis.

"Well, what then?" said Frank.

"Can you go without me?"

"Did I not tell you I am a man?"

"I am glad to hear that, for I don't intend to go."

"Of course," said Frank.

"I really am in earnest, Frank."

Frank suddenly stopped in the hall, which they had now reached, and dragging Louis to the lamp, looked in his face for a few seconds with deep attention.

"*Nonsense*, Louis; you don't mean it?"

"I do, though."

"And why, in the name of all patience? Here, Smith!"

"Hush!" said Louis, putting his hand on his cousin's mouth; "I cannot explain reasons to *him*. Keep your counsel, and go without me."

"In the name of patience, what reason can you have?"

"A good one," said Louis. "But I tell you, candidly, I do not expect you to sympathize with it; and perhaps I had better not tell you."

"No,—let's hear it, pray," said Frank, impatiently.

"What a long confabulation you are having," said Smith, coming up: "any secrets?"

"Yes," said Louis.

"I think I heard my name just now."

"We are not talking of you," said Louis.

"Here's Louis declaring he doesn't mean to go to Mrs. Fraser's on Tuesday," said Frank.

"Not go?" exclaimed one. "What's the row now?"

"Ill?" exclaimed another.

"Why?" asked Smith. "I only wish Mrs. Fraser had asked me."

Louis detached himself from Frank rather hastily, and pushing through the boys, walked determinedly away, without answering, into the school-room, and calling Alfred and Ethelred, set to work with them.

"I can't tell what's come to him," said Frank. "He's offended, I suppose, that I told you. Some new sanctimonious rigmarole he has got into his head, I suppose. He need not have been such a spoil-sport, however. I am sure Doctor won't let me go by myself."

"It's very sneaking of him," said Smith.

"He's always such a wet blanket on any thing that's merry," said Frank.

"But he went last half with you."

"So he did," replied Frank, "and was full of qualms about the music that was sung. *Didn't like the words of this,—didn't like the association of that.*"

"But, surely, he didn't say so there?"

"Not he," answered Frank; "he hasn't pluck enough. He looked shy, sang every thing, and solaced his conscience by abusing every thing, as we walked home."

"What a donkey he is," said Williams. "He wants a good shaking, to get these absurdities out of him. He'll never be good for any thing."

"I won't allow that," said Sutton. "He's a great deal better than any of us, though we may not like all he does. But, Digby, does he object to all songs? I've often heard him sing them."

"No, that's where it is," replied Frank, "and he can only be doing this on purpose to hinder me from going."

"I dare say it's only a little fun: he'll go fast enough," said Louis's defender. "We'll laugh him out of it."

They walked a few minutes in the playground, and then returned in a body to the house, passing by Louis with the intention of badgering him about his ungraciousness, but he was so surrounded with his *protégés*, that they felt it was a hopeless case, and as he afterwards spent an hour with

Dr. Wilkinson, he did not come among them again till bed-time.

Prayers were no sooner over than an attack on Louis commenced, simultaneously with the rush upstairs. In vain he strove to run up without making any explicit answers; he was pinioned by a dozen hands, and as many voices declared they would know "the why" before he went into his room.

"It's very shabby of you, Mortimer!" cried one.

"Now, parson, where's the sermon?" exclaimed another.

"Put him up in the pulpit!" said a third. "Make him confess."

"You give me no time to speak," said Louis, with heightened color.

"Silence in the court!" cried Smith.

"Will you promise to let me go when I have spoken?" said Louis.

"When you say you'll go, or give us your reasons for not going."

"I shall do neither the one nor the other," answered Louis. I do not mean to go; I have a sufficient reason, which I will tell Frank, though he must confess he has not behaved very generously this evening."

"I like your talking of generosity," said Frank.

"I have asked the Doctor's leave for you to go alone, and he has given it," said Louis, quickly. "And, Frank, I beg your pardon if I have seemed rude and unkind, but you really gave me no time to explain myself; if you wish for a reason, I will give you one in my own room."

"Much obliged to you," replied Frank, scornfully. "But I can tell the assembled company your reasons as well as you can. They sing a great number of ungodly songs at Mr. Fraser's, gentlemen, not fit for a saint to sing, and they happen to

be clothed in such fascinating guise, that he is tempted when he is there, and can't say he won't sing them; so he keeps out of the way like a good saint, and won't go to please such a sinner as myself."

Louis stood irresolutely on the stairs as the hands that held him relaxed their hold. "You do not understand me, Frank; I cannot expect it."

"I understand every bit of it," said Frank, sneeringly, "better than you do yourself. You are a rare Methodist, that never was intended for school, making yourself the laughing-stock of every one that sees and hears you. I'll take care Mr. Fraser knows why you are not there."

"You must, if you will," said Louis. "Good-night. Come, let me pass, if you please."

"Ay, pass! pass! pass! sainted martyr," echoed on all sides, while Frank's voice, above the others, continued in a tone of pique,—

"'Ay, do persecute me; I loves to be persecuted.'"

Louis ran upstairs and took refuge in his own room, and thankful was he to have so quiet a refuge. He sat down panting with his exertions, and pressed his head in his hands.

How precious it was to feel that ONE knew every thing, and though not a word could tell his wants and perplexities, his thoughts were all "known long before." Once his door was rudely unlatched, as his schoolfellows passed, and thrown wide open, and after he had reclosed it and locked it, two or three tumbled against it. The mirth of his aggressors was at last cut short, before they reached their rooms, by a stern voice.

"Young gentlemen! I am thoroughly ashamed of you. Digby! is this worthy of you? But that I know it would

He sat down, panting with his exertions, and pressed his head in his hands.—
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be a trouble to Mortimer, I would not trust you by yourself on Tuesday night. Remember, you owe it to him that I do not at once say you shall not go. If I hear any more of this, young gentlemen, I shall visit it severely on you all."

He then waited on the landing till each was in his room.

Frank's worst feelings were now in the ascendant, and Louis reaped the fruits in studied coldness and marked neglect from his cousin and his partisans the next morning; but in the course of the afternoon he watched his opportunity when Frank was upstairs, and persuaded him to come into his room for a few minutes. "Only a few minutes, Frank," he said. Frank's lip curled, and he hesitated, but finally ungraciously allowed himself to be led in, though he would only stand near the door, with a cloudy brow, as if he just endured the explanation Louis wished to give. "Frank, I cannot tell you how sorry I am that we should quarrel."

"It's your own affair," said Frank, sullenly.

"You know I cannot tell all the boys what I tell you, Frank. You are quite right about the reason why I cannot go to the party. I am not sure, in the first place, that the excitement would not be very bad for me in the middle of school; and then, I candidly confess, that I cannot bear the things they sing. Are Christian voices intended to be used in such love songs and Bacchanalian ditties? I feel, at least, that *I* am wrong in singing them; I cannot think I do it to God's glory."

"But who thinks of the meaning of Italian songs? it is but so many syllables," said Frank.

"If I did not understand them I should never have thought of it: I believe half the people that sing those things do not understand a word, and they are no more to them than do,

re, mi, fa; but my Latin helps me a little; and then again, those English things we sang last I did not admire."

"It's very polite of you to condemn every one else as you do," replied Frank.

"I do not condemn others," said Louis, eagerly; "I only know what is best for myself. If others do not think there is any harm, there is none, perhaps, for them; but as I do, it cannot be right for me. Do not think me unkind," he added, earnestly; "you cannot tell how very hard I have found it to say that I would not go, if it were but for your sake. I knew you would not see it, Frank, but that ought not to hinder me in doing what I know is right for me. I am too much influenced by others, and now Reginald and Hamilton are both gone, I confess I am rather afraid of myself."

"But surely you can refuse to sing those things you don't like; there are plenty of harmless ones besides."

Louis shook his head. "You know I had not courage before, and I dare not hope I should again, if I put myself in the way. We cannot judge for one another, Frank. I feel that these assemblies do not suit me, Frank,—that they distract me too much; and I feel sure I ought not to go."

"But," persisted Frank, "you sing heaps of things of your own that I think are little, if any, better than Mrs. Fraser's favorites."

"Well, I don't think them so," said Louis, gently. "The right or wrong of an action depends upon our feeling of it often: if our consciences cannot believe it right, it must be wrong to us, even though all the world call it harmless. I do not mean to say, Frank, that we know all right and wrong by our *feelings;* but if we think a thing wrong, it becomes wrong to us. I always try to ask myself when I

am thinking of doing any thing,—Can I do this to God's glory? and if I cannot answer yes, I feel I ought not to do it."

"Well, you've a right to your own way of thinking," said Frank, shortly; "but like many of your ways, it is rather an odd one. There ought to be a new world for you saints."

"There is an old madrigal we sing at home sometimes," said Louis, "that expresses my feelings quite on love-sick poetry:

> "'Oh, that the learned poets of this time,
> Who in a love-sick line so well can speak,
> Would not consume good wits in hateful rhyme,
> But with deep care some better subject seek:
> For if their music please in earthly things,
> How would it sound if strung with heavenly strings!'"

"Well, I suppose you have said all you have to say," said Frank.

"Are we friends, Frank?" said Louis, holding out his hand.

Frank took it coldly, and then left the room. For some days he and some of his adherents were very cool towards Louis, till some quiet act of self-denial charmed them out of their frigidity, and his meekness was rewarded by a complete restoration to their favor.

CHAPTER VI.

"Thou hast also given me the shield of Thy salvation; and Thy right hand hath holden me up, and Thy gentleness hath made me great. Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip.

"My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."—*Psalms* xviii. 35, 36; lxxiii. 26.

It was some days before Ferrers summoned up courage or found time to return Louis's call. Louis had informed Dr. Wilkinson of all that had passed, and had obtained his permission to give Ferrers audience in the Doctor's private dining-room. Dr. Wilkinson also invited Ferrers to spend the evening with him, and subsequently followed up all Louis's kind endeavors for his benefit, by stimulating him, assisting his studies, and cheering him, with the hope of doing something for the future for himself.

It must not, however, be supposed that the Doctor encouraged these efforts of his old pupil by the air-castles Louis drew of restoration to his former state of life. The Doctor's, though less delightful, was a more healthy view, when he set before him contentment with his present lot, and urged him to a desire of doing the work given him in the station to which he had been so plainly called.

Michaelmas, at length, arrived. Frank Digby bade a final adieu to his school life, and entered at Cambridge. Louis being now one of the elder boys in the school, and having been a twelvemonth in the first class, his master stimulated him to keep the first place there. There were one or two in the class of greater industry and energy than himself—of

whom Charles Clifton was one,—who gave him considerable trouble in maintaining this situation. Many times he felt inclined to yield the struggle, and only roused himself by the reflection, "It is my duty," to continue the contest, which was, though he was unconscious of it, too much for his strength. He had grown very fast for some months; but Dr. Wilkinson had become so accustomed to his attenuated figure and pale face that they caused no anxiety, especially as his efforts were in no way relaxed; and knowing Louis's constitutional indolence and dreaminess, he urged him on to renewed exertions, in the hope of having his favorite pupil his head boy, knowing nothing of the little time Louis took for recreation,—how constantly all, and more than all, his spare time was given to others,—how anxious he was to do *all* the good that lay in his little sphere,—that, rather than relinquish any of his plans of usefulness among his younger schoolfellows, he often sat up in his own room an hour or two at night, and rose an hour earlier in the morning to prepare his own lessons. In order to give him every advantage in his power, Dr. Wilkinson often gave him private lessons after school-hours; and this unceasing routine at last brought its attendant train of weariness, languor, violent headaches, and sleepless nights. But, in spite of fits of yawning, and greater disinclination than ever to general exertion, Louis had now so thoroughly attained to a habit of regular and constant employment, and had so great a fear of neglecting any talent committed to him, that he worked steadily and patiently on, winning the respect and esteem of all, and the warm love of many around him. The second quarter was nearly over, the examination papers were just given out, and Louis had been consulting with idle Alfred one morning on his plans of operation, and had dismissed him a few minutes

before the school-bell rang, to look over a translation of a portion of the Œdipus Tyrannus of Sophocles, which he had been rendering into English verse. His head swam so much that he could hardly decipher the letters, and, after a vain attempt to collect his ideas or to guide his pen, he laid it aside, and went into the open air to revive himself. As he passed out of the school-room, Alfred caught his hand. "You are ill, Louis. I am sure you are. What can I get for you?"

"Only give me your shoulder a few minutes," he replied, faintly. "Air,—I want air."

"Open the door, Smith," cried Alfred; "Louis is ill."

"Hallo, Mortimer!" exclaimed Smith, as he flung open the portal. "Are you your own wraith? Why, man alive, what's come over you? There, heaven's own breeze will refresh you. You get too little of heaven's breezes. Why don't you get out oftener?"

Louis thanked him with a smile, and with his and Alfred's help got to a seat a little beyond the door, and in a few minutes seemed much better.

"What was the matter?" asked Smith, kindly. "I'll tell Doctor you are not fit to come into class this morning; you've got such white lips, and look like a fainting lady. I'll tell you what, Louis," he added, "you do too much, and you're not strong enough; we've said so hundreds of times —you're too good by far: when you've got so much to do for yourself, you shouldn't do so much for others; flesh and blood won't stand it."

"I am sure I think enough of myself," replied Louis.

"Lots of us wish we were like you in some things," said Smith, "but it is not our nature, you know; I'll tell you what, Louis,—it is not an easy thing to go on steadily in the

face of ridicule, persevering in doing all you can for every one, and I know that there is scarcely one of the fellows that has laughed at you, that doesn't feel how much better you are than any of us, and doesn't wish to be like you, because yours isn't all talk, like some people's religion."

"Are you better, Mortimer?" asked several voices.

He was presently surrounded by several members of the first class.—"What's the matter?"

"Thank you, I am quite well, now," said Louis, rising. "There's the school-bell. How kind you all are!"

"Come, that's a good story! You are sarcastic this morning," said another.

"Come, St. Louis, take my arm," said a third; "you're a good sort of fellow, in spite of your methodism. You look more like heaven than earth at present. I think your mother will say the holidays don't come too soon."

Louis protested that he was quite well again, and they proceeded to the class-room, and soon the business of the day commenced. Louis took his place as head of the first class, and began to read aloud his poetical translation. He had proceeded nearly half through, when the paper ceased to be legible, the same misty swimming of the head returning; and scarcely conscious of an exclamation from his master and class-fellows in a breath, he fell insensible on the floor, his fall a little broken by Smith, who stood near him.

A scene of confusion ensued, and when Louis opened his eyes, he found himself supported in his master's arms, raised upon two chairs near the open window; one or two servants, and Mrs. Wilkinson near him with cold water and other restoratives. The first words he heard before he opened his eyes were from his master: "Poor fellow! I ought to have guarded against this; he is quite overdone." Louis tried to

speak, but was only able to turn a look of earnest affection on his master, deprecating his self-accusation.

It was many minutes before he could speak so as to be intelligible. The utmost concern was on the faces of all present: one of the servants was crying, and his schoolfellows stood in a kind of awe-struck silence, looking as if they never expected him to move again.

Dr. Wilkinson spoke cheerfully to him, and as soon as he appeared strong enough, proposed his removal to the drawing-room sofa. He had just strength enough to reach it, with the joint assistance of the Doctor and one of his schoolfellows, when he fainted again. Dr. Wilkinson sent immediately for the medical man, and was seriously alarmed at the length of this second fit. It was more than an hour before Smith, who had run full speed for the doctor, returned, and by this time Louis was better, and comfortably established near the drawing-room fire, with a warm shawl of Mrs. Wilkinson's over his feet. The Doctor had been obliged to leave him, but Mrs. Wilkinson was sitting by him, and caring most tenderly for all his possible wants. He lay very quietly, gazing out of the window, almost too weak to wonder how he came there.

"Well, my young friend, I hear a curious tale of you. Whoever heard of a schoolboy fainting?" said the medical gentleman. "You are better now, are you not?"

Louis smiled.

"He is very weak, Mr. Whalley," said Mrs. Wilkinson.

The doctor sat down by Louis, and after hearing all that was to be heard, cheerfully took his leave, promising to send some medicine, and, asking to see Dr. Wilkinson in another room, shook hands with the invalid. Louis looked very sorrowfully at him.

"What do you mean to ask by that earnest look?" said the gentleman.

"Am I in danger?"

"I thought so," replied Mr. Whalley, kindly. "No, cheer up; you want taking care of. You must put by Latin and Greek, and all the E. D. for a time, and I hope we shall soon see 'Richard himself again.' You were never very robust, I believe; I shall order the very acceptable prescription of home for you as soon as you are a little better; but don't frighten yourself, there's no danger."

Louis's pale countenance flushed, and he clasped his hands. "I am very foolish," he murmured inwardly; "but oh, my Father, my heart and flesh faileth."

Mr. Whalley wished him good-by and left the room; and soon calmed and pacified, Louis fell into a quiet sleep.

Mr. Whalley advised that his parents should be written to, and that he should be removed as soon as possible. "He wants perfect rest and quiet; and a mother's sympathy will be the best thing for him: I do not think his lungs are affected, but in his weak state I should advise Torquay or the Isle of Wight for the winter. He seems a delicate plant, but they often weather a storm that splits the tree."

Nothing could exceed the kindness and attention shown to Louis by his master and Mrs. Wilkinson. He was removed to a light and prettily-furnished room on a cheerful side of the house, away from all noise, and here he lay the greater part of the day, being carried down in the evening to the drawing-room sofa. His weakness was so excessive that a sudden noise would bring on a fainting fit, and Dr. Wilkinson would not allow him to risk any thing by walking to the drawing-room. It was the middle of the third day after his first attack that his parents arrived, and were almost

immediately shown up into his room. He was asleep, and they stood for some time looking silently on his thin white face, noticing his sunken eyes, with the black rings around them, and his long white fingers that lay on the bed-clothes. Before he awoke they retired out of sight, that he might be quietly informed of their arrival; for quietly as it was told him it was almost too much for him.

It was several days before he was strong enough to be removed, even to Clifton, where Mr. Mortimer had taken lodgings in Louis's favorite crescent. During these few days Mr. Mortimer mixed now and then with the boys, and on every side he heard, from masters and pupils, the praises of his dear boy. Alfred, whose grief was excessive, had a general invitation to come to York-crescent, whenever Dr. Wilkinson would allow him. At length Louis was removed, and when in the crescent, by the instrumentality of careful nursing and daily airings, he gradually grew strong enough to take a longer journey, and by the united advice of several medical men, he set out for Torquay one fine day in the middle of December. There was then no railway between Bristol and Exeter, and their journey was performed in a post-chaise.

Louis had been very much depressed for some days before his departure, and this morning he was more so than ever. He felt he could not confess to his parents why he dreaded the change, and how the name of Torquay sounded as a knell to him. Long had he knelt that morning in prayer that it might be his Heavenly Father's will that he might recover his strength; earnestly had he pleaded the tears and effectual petition of Hezekiah; like him he had wept sore; and then he felt that his will was unsubdued, and he mourned that he could not rejoice in the thought of that glorious

deliverance from sin and the body of death. All his thoughts seemed dark and sorrowful, and all he could say was, "O Lord! send out Thy light and truth; let them lead me. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Thou seest through a glass darkly." And in the midst of all he could say, tremblingly, "Though I walk in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." And was this fainting confidence confounded? Oh, how precious is that promise that the tender Saviour will not break even the bruised reed! Louis often thought of those sweet words in Isaiah, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." "The enemy cried out fast" against him, but underneath the fainting child of God are "the everlasting arms," even when he sees them not; and in his greatest despondency he had a sure hope, that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. "I will bring her into the valley of Achor, and there will I speak *comfortably* (to her heart);" and during these seasons of trouble, who shall say how often and how sweetly the Lord speaks to the hearts of His own? It was with a chastened and trusting, though yet not joyful spirit, that Louis left the scene of his silent communings. "I will trust, and not be afraid," was the reiterated language of his heart: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him." His father tenderly assisted him down the long flight of steps from the terrace to the chaise, and there at the door stood poor Ferrers. He shrank back a little as Mr. Mortimer approached; but Louis caught sight of him, and stopping, he held out his hand with a smile.

"This is very kind of you, Ferrers. This is my schoolfellow, William Ferrers, father."

Mr. Mortimer made some kind remarks, but he was anxious to get his son into the carriage, and shortened the interview.

"Will you write to me, Ferrers?" asked Louis, when he was seated.

"I shall be very glad," said Ferrers, shortly. He attempted to say something, but seemed unable, and, putting a little parcel into Louis's hand, he walked away at a rapid rate. Louis's father and mother were both struck with his agitated manner, but they made no remark on it to Louis just then. They made him take possession of one seat in the carriage, and bolstered him up comfortably with cushions. As the carriage passed in front of Clifton church, Louis raised himself, and gazed earnestly on the magnificent view.

"I think," said his mother, "that is the finest peep in Clifton."

"I think so too," replied Louis, quietly; and a moment after he added, "Oh, mamma! what a thing it is to live! What a world this would be, if there were no sin! I cannot think that there can be a more beautiful place than this world, when the sons of God shouted at its creation! Does not every thing seem crying, 'Come, Lord Jesus!' When He comes, there shall be no more sorrow, nor crying, nor death; the inhabitants shall not say 'I am sick,' and they shall all be righteous."

"'The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God,'" said Mr. Mortimer.

"Oh, father!" said Louis, earnestly, "I feel as if I could never get beyond that verse in that chapter. It seems as if that verse went up with a cry to God like the cry of the children of Israel. 'The whole creation groaneth and tra-

vaileth, and ourselves also, that have received the first-fruits of the Spirit.' "

"'Though the vision tarry, wait for it,'" said his mother: "'In the end it SHALL come.' 'He that believeth in the Lord shall not make haste, neither shall he be confounded,' Louis."

"But you should look to the end of the chapter, and lean on the glorious conclusion," said his father. "'What shall separate us from the love of Christ?' He hath loved us with an everlasting love, and nothing can separate us. 'Though clouds and darkness are round about Him, yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne.' He is faithful, my dear boy; He cannot deny himself. In Christ we are complete, and altogether lovely in His sight, and He knows the thoughts that He has to us,—thoughts of peace, and not of evil. And now, my boy, you must rest quietly, and think of these precious truths. Let His word be the joy and rejoicing of your heart."

Louis did as desired; and it seemed as if his father had comprehended the state of his mind, for the thoughts of peace found a resting-place in his mind, and he lay still in calm happiness, and neither spoke nor moved till the first stage was completed.

When they were comfortably housed that night in the best inn in Bridgewater, he enlarged a little to his father on Ferrers' history, and opened the little parcel, which he found contained an old edition of Watts' "Happiness of Separate Spirits." In the envelope were a few lines.

"DEAR LOUIS,—

"You wished to see this book a short time ago. I could not get a new edition, and I have been a long time

hunting in the old-book shops for this. I am glad I have found it at last, and I know I need not apologize for its antiquity. May Torquay do all that your friends must wish.

"Yours gratefully,

"W. FERRERS."

Louis could not talk enough of Ferrers' kindness in hunting about for this book. It is to be remarked, generally, that they who think they cannot do enough for others, always esteem most gratefully a little service done to themselves.

CHAPTER VII.

"Whom have I in Heaven but THEE?"

I MUST now beg my reader to accompany me to a pretty and convenient low-built house, surrounded by a nice little garden, which stands at one extremity of a small sweeping bay at Torquay. The house is built so close to the water's edge, that at high water the sea comes up to the garden railings; and here, upon the rustic garden-seats, have invalids, time out of mind, watched the rise and fall of the roaring sea. I do not know it sufficiently well to describe it more accurately, that it may be recognized as the temporary dwelling-place of Louis Mortimer and Vernon Digby,—for Vernon, with his father, mother, and eldest sister, were there awaiting Louis's arrival.

Vernon's cruise on the Mediterranean had apparently restored his health, after the violent attack alluded to in a

former chapter; but all his friends had been very anxious that he should forego the Michaelmas and Christmas terms, as, in the eyes of many, there was still considerable delicacy about him. Vernon would, however, hear of no further nursing, as the doctors had pronounced him well. A little cough, small appetite, and obvious restlessness, had made his father rather uneasy on his return from the Christmas vacation; and though no danger was apprehended by the consulting physician, Devonshire was recommended, as Vernon said, "just to please Sir Francis;" and it was agreed that the invalids should share the same lodgings in the same locality.

It was about five o'clock in the evening when the Mortimers arrived at their new abode. Sir Francis and Lady Digby, with their children, were at the garden-gate to receive them, and Vernon almost lifted his cousin from the carriage into the house. The fire was blazing cheerfully, the curtains drawn, and a luxurious-looking sofa near the fire for Louis. Candles were lighted,—and a piano in the room, with plenty of books and elegancies, gave it quite a home appearance.

"How snug you are!" exclaimed Mrs. Mortimer; "I think I shall always send you as pioneers when I want lodgings. This makes us feel quite cheerful at once, does it not, Louis?"

"Louis looks quite *doly*, as we say in Yorkshire," remarked Vernon, who had by this time placed his cousin on the sofa, and with Charlotte's assistance was divesting him of his wrappings. "What Egyptian mummies our fond mothers make of us, Louis, poor *emancipated infidels* as we are, as an old man once said of himself near us. You don't look quite *emaciated* yet, as a body may say; as for me, *me voici! tout-à-fait gros.* I am afraid I cannot even clear my throat, I am so well."

Louis was too much exhausted to do more than smile, and Vernon continued his attentions with cheerful discretion, while Lady Digby pointed out the convenience of their new house to her sister.

"Look here," she said, opening a door into an adjoining room, where a fire sent forth a cheerful flicker; "here is Louis's room; he will not have far to go, and yours opens out of it. Poor dear fellow! I thought it would be so convenient for him. We have two sitting-rooms besides this, and we will leave him in possession when he cannot bear our voice; you shall see our rooms to-morrow; you are too tired for further inspection to-night. I hope Torquay will do all for Louis that it has done for Vernon; not that I ever thought there was much the matter with him when he came home, only a little cough, and now that seems quite to have left him. Dear boy, he has such excellent spirits; but his father is angry very often that he does not take proper care of himself. He wants such constant watchfulness not to stay out too long in the afternoon, and will go into the garden without his great-coat, and I am afraid he over-fatigues himself sometimes, though Dr. L. says moderate exercise will not hurt him."

"He is looking well," said Mrs. Mortimer.

"Yes, he is; we are grown quite old-fashioned folks. Dr. L. says Vernon should dine early, so we all dine at one, and take tea at six. Francis adopts it quite merrily; he is so wrapped up in Vernon, I think he would do any thing for his good. Will our hours suit you? I am so glad we are together; we shall be so happy."

"I hope so, dear," said Mrs. Mortimer. There was a tear in her eye as she spoke, and she glanced fearfully at the half-open door, through the opening of which she saw her dear

son languidly resting against a mass of pillows, while Charlotte and Vernon were bringing him tea from the larger table to a smaller one by his sofa. "My boy is so ill, Beatrice."

Lady Digby soothed and reassured her as much as she was able, and soon as possible led her again into the cheerful parlor, where they found Louis much refreshed by his tea.

It was some time before Louis recovered from the effects of his journey; for many days he seemed so much the worse for the change from Clifton, that the worst fears were entertained for him; even the medical man holding out but little hopes of his recovery. He did not rise till the middle of the day, and was then carried into the sitting-room, where he lay quietly on the sofa, hardly changing his position, tranquilly watching the movements of those around him, and occasionally reading a little. Vernon's care and sympathy were almost beautiful: active and lively as he was, he would often sit an hour at a time on a low seat at his cousin's sofa; as quiet as the tenderest nurse, sometimes bathing his head with eau de Cologne, and at others volunteering to read—an offer which Louis often gratefully accepted; for there was something in the gentle sound of Vernon's musical voice and perfect intonation, that delighted his fastidious invalid taste, and soothed his more restless moments. Among other books, Ferrers' gift was one often chosen; and one day, after coming to the concluding paragraph a second time, Vernon remarked,—

"It was a master mind that wrote this, Louis; I don't know when I have met with a sermon that has delighted me so much."

"Then you are not tired of reading it so often, dear Vernon?"

"By no means, even were your subjects less fascinating.

It does a poor careless sinner like myself good to be forced to dwell sometimes on serious topics, Louis, and I will not say but that your little innocent comments have made me think."

"Oh, Vernon! *I* make *you* think?" exclaimed Louis, raising himself from the pillow, with a slight flush of pleasure in his face. "You are so far superior to me, I have thought so very often of your kindness in sitting down reading to me hour after hour as you do."

"Come, come," said Vernon, "my mother never allows me to read an hour at a time."

"But put the times together," said Louis; "the benefit is mine, Vernon."

"Will you not allow that I may have some in reading those magnificent chapters in Isaiah and Ezekiel you chose yesterday, to say nothing of the other in St. Luke?" asked Vernon. "And I tell you, Louis, why your remarks do make me think. They are not cut and dried as though you had been making a sermon for my edification; they come, I know, from the fulness of your heart, not to *teach* me: you speak because you cannot help it. I should be too proud to be taught, *perhaps;* but I must be arrested sufficiently to wonder where your simple wisdom comes from."

"Louis's eyes glistened, and his heart swelled with wondering gratitude to Him who maketh any man's words of power. He did not speak, and Vernon absently stirred the fire, and then thoughtfully gazing into its depths, continued—

"To return to Watts, Louis, it has a strange fascination about it. It makes one wish to be freed from the trammels of our bodies. What an idea to have the wide expanse of immeasurable thought and illimitable space spread before you—a free unfettered being—an enlarged capacity both of

comprehension and enjoyment, and all the treasures of knowledge and science within the delighted grasp, and with all, ceaseless untiring activity, and all—why it seems like the infinity of the works of nature, too vast for thought—what a heaven !"

Louis listened to his cousin with animation in the beginning of his speech, but his expression became very grave as he concluded, and he replied very seriously—

"And yet, dear cousin, I almost—nay I am sure, we do not think alike on the happiness of heaven."

"As how ?" asked Vernon, turning quickly round. "Did you not say that the idea was very delightful of being constantly employed, and of having employment suited to our different dispositions and tastes ? Did you not say your childish idea of heaven was what mine was, I remember ; a large room made of clouds, with angels sitting in rows playing harps for ever and ever ? and I remember, when a child of five years old, checking a thought which I fancied was sinful, that I should be very tired of sitting playing a harp forever ; and I believe, Louis, we carry to manhood more of our childish prepossessions than we are aware of—crude, undigested notions on many subjects, and on none more than on religious subjects. Your favorite, Watts, has overleaped the limits usually placed before our imaginations, and has given his readers something tangible on which to fix their ideas ; something to wish for ; something to aspire to in the world to come. Wherein should we differ ? We are agreed in liking the same ideas, and I confess that the name of the old Calvinist prejudiced me against him before I commenced."

"I must say," replied Louis, "that I cannot see much difference in your aspirations after heaven and those of the Mahometans, Vernon."

Vernon opened his mouth and eyes. "Make that good, Louis, and perhaps you may gain a convert."

"You would laugh at the idea of a heaven of houries, wine-cups, and pleasure-gardens, Vernon," answered Louis; "your intellectual and more refined nature would make you despise such inducements, if you could believe them; but do you not make a heaven of those things in which you do delight? Do you not, dear Vernon, make a god of intellectual enjoyment? and is it not because you feel that such a heaven as Watts describes would be the very essence of ethereal lofty intelligence, that you esteem it as something you are capable of loving and understanding? One thing you said made me think this: you speak of the works of Nature; you speak of knowledge and comprehension; of unfettered being; but you never spoke of HIM,—NATURE'S GOD,—of HIM whom it is His people's delight to serve, whose glory is the theme and object of all His servants' works and songs. *His servants shall serve Him*, and every thing there is subservient to His glory."

"Why you quibble, Louis," said Vernon, coloring; "of course, I acknowledge all this when I agree to your author's sentiments."

"No you do not," said Louis, very decidedly.

The cousins' eyes met fully; Vernon looked confused, and for a moment rather angry. It was but for a moment; for he said presently:

"Well then, philosopher, what different aspect does heaven wear to you?"

> "Were I in heaven without my God,
> 'Twould be no joy to me,"

replied Louis, solemnly. "My heaven is the presence of God, the consequent freedom from sin; the joy of being constantly

with my beloved Saviour; no longer seeing through a glass darkly, but face to face. Then it is a joy to think of being always actively employed in His service, to be always associated with those who esteem nothing of any moment but the glory of God; and oh! how delightful to meet our dear friends, and to talk with them of all the love that brought us safely there."

"We have different minds," said Vernon, undecidedly.

Louis looked at his cousin anxiously and sadly. Vernon presently asked,—

"Do you ever feel afraid of dying?"

"I may well be asked that question now, dear Vernon," he answered calmly. "I am not now afraid of death; and I do not think since I was a child I have feared that Christ would receive me for His own sake; but I have been very sorrowful at the idea of leaving all and dying so young. It is a beautiful world, and there are many things you know, Vernon, many hopes of usefulness; and then death looks dark sometimes when our bodily weakness puts a cloud between us and Christ. I do not know why a Christian should shrink from that which will place him in his Saviour's bosom, but it was so—I was very unbelieving aud sorrowful; but that is gone now, *quite* gone. I think I am willing, and I trust desirous, to depart and be with Christ; and my hope is as fair and unclouded as the blue summer sky. Thank God! He has made me feel His will is best."

Vernon's countenance showed much emotion, and he did not trust himself to look at Louis as he replied, "But things are not so bad as that, Louis; I did not mean that."

Louis smiled and shook his head.

"Nay, but you must not give way to such gloomy thoughts."

"They are not gloomy, Vernon: they are the stay and joy of my heart."

Vernon did not speak, and a few minutes after their *tête-à-tête* was disturbed by the entrance of the rest of the party from their walk.

CHAPTER VIII.

"As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."—Rom. xii. 4, 5.

Vernon's cough had entirely disappeared, and his appetite being recovered, Dr. L. pronounced him sufficiently well to return to Cambridge. A few days after the conversation detailed in the previous chapter, Reginald arrived, and this, together with the knowledge of the pleasure his company was to Louis, induced Vernon to prolong his stay at Torquay until the end of the vacation. Sir Francis was, however, quite tired out, and Mr. Mortimer found it necessary to return to Dashwood; and as no immediate danger appeared to threaten Louis, he set off with Sir Francis. Vernon and Reginald were, as usual, constant companions when Louis was to be alone, and Reginald was so incautious that he had often to be dismissed the sick-room. They took long walks and rides, explored every available nook, and piloted Lady Digby and Charlotte occasionally to some noted locality. When the weather was fine, Louis went out in a Bath chair, and as he grew a little stronger, his rides were extended to a length that allowed of his accompanying the rest of the party in their

more moderate walks, one or the other taking alternately the station by his chair.

"I declare it is enough to kill an invalid, to meet the number of wan, broken-down looking persons we see in the chairs here," exclaimed Reginald one day to his mother, as they strolled along together some distance behind Louis's chair. "I don't think it affects Louis; he is really less low-spirited than usual."

"Dr. L. says his happy state of mind is the best chance for him," said Mrs. Mortimer, "and I almost hope he is a little better."

"Dr. L. seems fond of him," said Reginald. "He is an excellent Christian."

"He is," replied Mrs. Mortimer. "I have often thought, Reginald, that it is a great mistake to imagine that every man who desires to work the work of God must belong to the ministry of the Church. I really think a medical man is often able to do more for the souls of others than a clergyman. He has often access where a clergyman cannot enter, and his word is revered so much in times of sickness. Then, again, you remember Captain Stoke? His aunt once said to me, 'He is so pious, it is a pity he did not go into the Church, he ought to have been a clergyman. He takes such pains with the soldiers of his regiment; he has taught them a number of innocent songs and many hymns, which they sing among themselves; and he visits their families, assembles them for prayer, and looks after the observance of the Sabbath among them.' This was while he was in India. Could he have done so much had he been a clergyman? I thought it needed no comment—that man's place was plainly in the army, and not in the ministry of the Church. But who is that stopping Louis's chair now?" she added, looking

anxiously forward. "That must not be. Hurry on, Reginald, and tell them they must move forward."

Reginald ran on as desired, and very soon reached the chair. A group was formed around it, of which the cynosure was a stranger, whose form seemed very familiar to Reginald from a distance, and on reaching him, was immediately recognized as that appertaining to Hamilton. The meeting was very pleasant for all parties; and as it turned out that Hamilton had paid a visit to Torquay expressly to see Louis, he was invited by Mrs. Mortimer to take up his abode in their cottage for a few days. His arrival was a great delight to Louis, and his manner and expressions were so quiet, and he was so amenable to every hint respecting the invalid, that Mrs. Mortimer was glad to have him in the house. There were more walks than ever now, for Hamilton's powers of walking were only equalled by Reginald's. Vernon returned from one or two excursions so "dead beat,"—to use Reginald's expression,—that both his mother and aunt strongly dissuaded him from undertaking any more.

"Take Charlotte with you this afternoon," said Lady Digby, "and then you can return when you feel tired. Remember, you must not tire her."

"Oh, mamma!" exclaimed Charlotte, "he is so disgusted. What *immense* bores sisters are!—are they not, Vernon?"

"To be sure; and you more than all," answered Vernon, kissing her. "But, come, I won't object to the incumbrance this afternoon, if Reginald and Hamilton don't, and I fully appreciate mamma's affection for her son in permitting you to go under our charge."

Of course, the two gentlemen were only too proud of Charlotte's company; and they set off with many injunctions not to be out late.

"I think a fog is coming on," said Mrs. Mortimer.

"Remember, dear, the evenings close in soon," said Lady Digby, "and Dr. L. says a great deal about night air. You must not get a cough again; your father will think I have been very careless."

"Remember, you are not too strong yet," said Dr. L., who entered the garden as Vernon left it; "three quarters of an hour is enough; the evening will be foggy."

"Oh, ay! I remember. Hadn't you better give me a large blanket, mamma?" he called out. "What Molly Coddles our fond mothers and these croaking old doctors make of one, don't they, Hamilton?"

Hamilton either did not hear, or did not feel inclined to notice the appeal, and they went merrily on. Their walk lay along the beach, and they passed point after point, forgetting in their amusing talk how far they had already come, when Charlotte reminded her brother of the time.

"You are right," said Reginald, suddenly looking round. "It's getting dark; come, Vernon, we'll all go back together."

"I am not a bit tired. I want to show Lottie the spring we found the other day, as we are so far. Why, what walkers we've been! I had no idea we had come so far."

"Nor any idea how late it is," said Hamilton. "Every ten minutes will be of consequence now, Vernon. It will be dark in another hour, and we have been one coming here."

"Oh, Vernon! mamma will be so anxious," said Charlotte. "Let us come back."

"Anxious," said Vernon. "Mamma's obliged to be careful, because the doctor is; but she is very much on my side, after all. I am a very determined person. I must go on to the spring now. We can walk a little faster and make up for the loss of time."

"You must go by yourself, then," said Reginald, stoutly. "We will not; eh, Hamilton?"

"Certainly not."

Vernon endeavored to drag Charlotte along, and then made a feint of setting off by himself; but finding that no one stirred, he laughingly acquiesced in their arrangement.

They had not gone very far before Hamilton, who had been very silent for some minutes, exclaimed, "The fog is coming down rapidly. In another ten minutes we shall not be able to see our way an inch. Quick; the tide's coming up very fast. There's no time to lose. Miss Digby, we have all been very careless."

"Never fear," replied Vernon; "I always get out of my scrapes comfortably, and we are all together."

They hurried on, scarcely speaking. In less than a quarter of an hour the fog, like a dark curtain, spread over the sea and land, completely hiding their way from the pedestrians, and for some little while they cautiously proceeded, hardly daring to move a step.

"Let us keep close by the rock," said Hamilton. "Where is Miss Digby?"

The curiously muffled sound of Hamilton's voice sounded unpleasantly on their ears. He was a little in advance, and on Charlotte's reply, stepped back, and putting her hand in his arm, carefully walked in the direction of the cliffs till he touched them, his voice guiding the others to follow him. They now proceeded as quickly as the obscurity would allow, feeling their way till they reached one of the points they had passed previously, and were about to double it, when Reginald cried out, "Here is water. Good heavens, Hamilton, we are lost; the tide's up here."

There was a pause. Charlotte's hand trembled on Hamil-

ton's arm. "Can you see the light-house?" she asked. "Are we near the light-house?"

"We must be very near to see it, in this fog," replied Reginald.

"We must try and mount the cliff," said Vernon. "Or stay, Hamilton; take care of Charlotte one moment, don't stir till I come back."

"Where are you going?"

"To find our best way," replied Vernon.

It was useless to attempt to stay him: the utmost he would do was to consult a moment or two, and to allow Reginald to share his difficulties; and it was agreed that Hamilton should remain with Charlotte, while Vernon attempted to clamber round the point to ascertain whether the water had risen to the inner curve of the next bay, and Reginald was to climb the cliff, and find out the best footing above. Charlotte did not speak a word; but words could not express the prayerful thoughts that filled both her and Hamilton's mind as they stood alone for the next few moments. It was not long before the welcome sound of Vernon's voice, and then Reginald's, hailed them from a little distance above.

"Cheer up. It's a little bit of an easy ascent, and the water is not round here. I am coming down to lead you. There's a house close at hand, and a light to cheer you."

Another minute, and both the pioneers were within arm's length of Charlotte and Hamilton, and after a few seconds' confabulation, Charlotte was cautiously assisted up the ascent by Hamilton and her brother. She trembled so violently, that when they had gone a few yards, Vernon caught her in his arms, and hurried up the remainder of the way he had previously explored to the little house, and set her down

breathless at the door. The way proved very easy, and they were all soon in the kitchen of the descried refuge, and here, to their great alarm, Charlotte, when the fear was over, had a fit of hysterics. It was some little while before she was sufficiently recovered to be taken home; but before the light covered cart, which they were happy enough to procure here, was ready, Reginald hurried home with a boy and lantern, to relieve his aunt's and mother's minds.

At length the whole party were fairly on their way, the driver holding the horse's head with one, and a lantern with the other hand. Vernon, rather exhausted with his exertions, sat back in a corner, and close by him was Charlotte with her head leaning on his shoulder, while his arm supported her. Hamilton was in the opposite corner, profoundly silent.

As the cart at length drew up in front of the cottage, and nearly all the inmates of the house rushed out with candle and lamp to rejoice over them, Charlotte raised herself with a deep sigh, and Hamilton, who had already dismounted, assisted her carefully down to her mother. Vernon followed with rather less alacrity than usual, and as he emerged from his sheltered corner, and drew a deep breath of the thick heavy air, he was painfully sensible of a sharp sensation in his chest, as if a knife had been drawn across. It was but momentary, and the next minute he was cheering his mother with his usual animation, and drawing a vivid analogy between their situation and that of Sir Arthur and Miss Wardour, in the "Antiquary."

But neither his mother nor aunt could look lightly on it. They only spoke of the mercy of their escape: they did not upbraid their thoughtlessness; but Vernon felt this enough when he looked on his mother's tearful white face, and Charlotte's faint languid state.

"You had better take something to-night, my dear Vernon," said his mother. "I think you had better see Dr. L.; you look very white and tired."

"Dr. L. would tell me to go to bed, and I will prescribe that for myself."

"But he might give you something to prevent cold, dear."

"And prevent my setting off to-morrow, too, dearest mater. Not this time, thank you; I am not ill."

"Let me give you a little sal volatile and paregoric, with hot water, at least."

Vernon shrugged his shoulders, took the mixture in silence to his room, and threw it away without tasting it.

The following day he returned to Cambridge, and his mother bade him good-by, thankful that none of the party was the worse for the dangerous adventure.

CHAPTER IX.

"He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation."—*Ps.* xci. 15, 16.

"The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."—1 *John* ii. 17.

Louis remained at Torquay some months, and after Vernon's departure gradually improved in health, contrary to the expectation of all interested in him; and in April, as a more bracing climate was recommended for him, his mother took him to Tenby, where his recovery was so rapid that in a few weeks he was allowed to return home or to school, when-

ever he pleased. School was not to be thought of again, and accordingly, to his great delight, he set out with his mother for Norfolk, and arrived in Dashwood one fine May morning.

"Thou sentest a gracious rain upon thine inheritance, and refreshedst it when it was weary:" so it is, the former and the latter rain come equally from Him who has pledged Himself that He will never forsake His people. Sometimes the gracious rain is ushered in by black threatening clouds, yet the sun is still behind them, and how dark soever they may appear, by and by they shall pass away, and the warm rays shall descend again to cheer the softened earth. He shall descend like the tender rain. "On you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings:" so Louis thought, as the carriage which had brought them from Norwich drew near to his native place. Two or three days of rain had been succeeded by a brilliant sunshine, and his chastened and spiritual mind traced the analogy to his own case. He remembered how dark the cloud had been to him, how he had said to himself, "Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night?" But He was still shining behind the cloud: His inheritance was weary; there needed a closer drawing to Himself: the clouds of sickness and fear interposed, but with them came the gentle rain, and now the chastened heart could bear the sun of prosperity which poured on it. How his heart swelled: "My God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise! Oh, that the life Thou hast spared may be all Thine own! Take me, O Lord, for I am not able to give myself to Thee: keep me as the apple of Thine eye; hide me under the shadow of Thy wing."

My readers have long permitted me, as an old friend, to appear from time to time from behind the prompter's curtain and speak a word in my own person. Suffer me now one word.

How many among you feel that God *alone* has raised you from sickness,—that had He left you, all medical aid had been in vain? How many have lifted up the heart in true gratitude to Him, saying, "O Lord, I will praise THEE! The living, the living shall praise Thee! as I do this day." The Almighty God has declared, "Whoso offereth Me praise honoreth Me." "With supplication and THANKSGIVING our requests are to be made known to God." But is it not too often the case, that He is hardly remembered at all? Human aid, medical advice is sought, while He who supplies that, is forgotten times without number. Will ye not fear Him? King Asa, when diseased in his feet, sought to the physicians, and not to the Lord, and what was the sequel? HE DIED.

Give unto the Lord the glory due to His name.

Louis's father and mother were both in the carriage with him, but neither spoke, for they understood his feelings; their own were little different. As the carriage became visible at the top of the little elevation they were ascending, the church-bells struck up, and ere long a long troop of the villagers met the carriage, and threw flowers into it, welcoming Louis home with shouts and reverences. Louis was so taken by surprise, that he hardly knew what to say or do: he took off his hat and stood up in the carriage, to acknowledge the kind salutations, till the carriage entered the park. We will not enter into the particulars of the happy home-meeting. It was remembered at night as such an event should be considered in every Christian family. Louis missed one dear face: Reginald was now at Cambridge, and as the long vacation was yet some time off, he could not return to welcome him. Two or three months before, Vernon had reached the summit of his collegiate desires, being proclaimed

senior wrangler, first gold medallist, and first Smith's prize-man.* The great event now talked of was Vernon's next birthday, when he would be of age: Sir Francis intended it should be kept with all honors due, in consideration of his heirship, and the creditable manner in which he had passed his college career. The birthday was in September, and all the Mortimers, Meredith, and the Vernons, besides numberless other visitors, were invited to share in the festivities, which were to last beyond the actual day. Mary and little Fred were full of the expected pleasure, and eagerly anticipated the delight of being with all their little cousins at so busy and joyful a period.

A few days after Louis's return home, his father called him one morning into his study, and after a little silence he began,—

"Louis, my boy, I feel I owe a great debt of gratitude to Him who has restored you to me in health and strength again. We feel it together; my multiplied mercies, who can count them?" He added, reverentially, after a pause, "What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits? I may, indeed, say, we can render nothing but the offering of a thankful heart, and that he must give. But, my boy, I want to bestow some money in some charitable purpose, as a thank-offering for this special mercy; and as you are so nearly connected in this, I should like to give you the choice of the object; therefore choose, my dear Louis."

Louis was at first so overcome with pleasure, that he could not find words to thank his father. At last he replied, in a faltering tone,—

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* To the skeptical it may be mentioned, that there are *two* such instances on record. Might not this have been *one?*

"I have one great wish, father, as you are so kind to me, if you think it charity. I do; but perhaps it will be more than you intend to give."

"What is it? Speak out, and do not be afraid of expense. I think I can guess."

"Poor Ferrers, father. He has talent; he has been brought up as a gentleman."

Mr. Mortimer smiled.

"What is to be done with him?"

"Can you put him to college, papa?"

"And what does he purpose doing then?" asked Mr. Mortimer. "I do not object to it, my dear son; but we must carefully consider the utility of giving him this privilege; and this sum of money must not be idly thrown away. What I want you to feel is, that we should be even more careful stewards of that which we set apart for the service of God than of that which we call our own. What shall we assist your friend in doing?"

"Why, father, I hardly know; he wants a university education. He has talents, and I think would do well,—perhaps fit himself for a tutor. You know he might take pupils and would succeed much better if he had been at Oxford or Cambridge."

"Well, I will write and make inquiries about him. Do you think Dr. Wilkinson would take the trouble to find out his views for me?"

"I am sure he will, father," said Louis, joyfully.

In a few days Mr. Mortimer had instructed his lawyer to write to Dr. Wilkinson and obtain all necessary particulars respecting Ferrers: Mr. Mortimer's name was not to be mentioned; and in little more than a week a full and circumstantial account through him from Dr. Wilkinson arrived,

which satisfied Mr. Mortimer sufficiently for him to summon Louis to another cabinet council. It was agreed that it would neither be wisdom nor kindness to make too large an allowance; consequently, 500*l.* was placed in Mr. T.——'s hands, and he was instructed to allow Ferrers 120*l.* per annum, the remainder to be given to him on leaving college, or to be spent in necessary books. The college was also chosen for him; and when all was arranged, Mr. T—— wrote to offer this to Ferrers, who, we need hardly say, accepted it joyfully and gratefully; and easily persuading his master to give up his indentures, was placed by the same anonymous friend with Dr. Wilkinson till the Michaelmas term. I need not say how happy our hero was; he could hardly refrain from writing to congratulate Ferrers before receiving formal notification of it from him, and then had to weigh his words well in his answer, to prevent the secret from appearing in the joy of his heart.

Louis's own studies were now very easy. Mr. Mortimer was not ambitious for any of his children, and only desired that Louis should be sufficiently prepared for the ministry of the Church for which he was designed. He and Neville, who was intended for the same sacred office, studied together; but Neville was far more studious than Louis, and, though educated at home, was quite his equal.

All the Mortimers and Digbys paid a visit to Cambridge to witness the ceremony of the bestowal of Vernon's gold medal. It was a grand scene; and as the slight delicate-looking young man passed in review before the crowded house, every mouth was full of his praises; and many comments among the ladies were passed on his interesting appearance; while others, nearer to him, who could notice with a critical eye the hectic spot and fire of his lustrous gray eyes,

said too truly he was worn out. His strength was unequal to the ordeal imposed on his excitable frame. He did not know it himself. When the shouts seemed to pull down the immense senate-house, how proudly his heart beat! Bright visions of future fame and greatness rose before him, and all were again absorbed in the present delight of that proud feeling of being for that year at the head of the youth of Great Britain; and yet, how little was his fame known beyond the walls of Cambridge!

He left the house, and hastening to the inn where his mother was, threw himself into her arms.

"Mother, *dear* mother! the proudest thought I had was, that you were the happiest mother there; and the happiest I had was, that *I* had made you so."

Lady Digby kissed his wide forehead amid her tears.

"God bless you, my boy!—God bless you! and make you a blessing to your parents and country."

"Father!" he said, as he met his father's open hand and glistening eyes.

Nothing more was said between father and son; but they understood each other.

Presently Vernon tore off his cap and gown, and flung them to the other end of the room.

"Now, mother, let me sit on this stool, and lean my head on your knee, as I used when I was a little boy."

He suited the action to the word, and remained long in silence, with his mother's hand resting on his beautiful head, only removed from apparent sleep by the rapid twinkle of his eye from underneath the nearly closed eyelid. It was enough for Sir Francis to sit and look at him; he had not even power to commend his example to Frank, even supposing Frank had been in the way; but that gentleman,

being rather afraid of a lecture on account of considerable and oft-repeated delinquencies, had taken himself out of the way with some of his chosen associates.

It is surprising how little some people understand the symptoms of ill-health. Vernon was lively, and had a brilliant color; and at times, when pale and delicate, it was simply attributed to over-fatigue; and, after spending a week or two at home, a cruise on the Mediterranean was again resorted to, to set him up and give him tone; but he was past that.

CHAPTER X.

"Ah, James,
But he was sadly changed, when he came down
To keep his birthday.
It struck a damp
On all our merriment."—*Southey's Eclogues.*

SEPTEMBER was fast approaching, and great were the preparations at Castle Digby for the coming of age of the heir. Vernon wrote home frequently, and when he considered it necessary to mention his health, always said, "I am very well." His birthday took place at the end of the month, and it was arranged that he should benefit by the sea-breezes as long as possible; consequently he was not expected home much before the day. Duly at the appointed time Mr. Mortimer and his family set off, and duly they arrived at the beautiful seat of Sir Francis Digby. Mary and Fred were quartered with the large party of little ones, of whom Lady Digby's younger children, ranging from thirteen to three years old, formed the greater share. Nothing was

thought of, from eldest to youngest, but pic-nics, parties of pleasure, and all kinds of schemes for passing away the time as pleasantly as possible. Many of Vernon's friends were invited; among whom were Meredith and Hamilton. The latter was previously engaged, but Meredith, who had been passing part of his vacation with Reginald and Louis, arrived with them. Sir George Vernon and family arrived the evening of the same day with the Mortimers, and nearly all the invited visitors were accommodated in the large castle before the arrival of the hero. Rooms that had not been used for years, haunted rooms, dilapidated rooms, light closets, and dimly-lighted apartments, were all in requisition. Repairs and cleansing had been going on for a month or two previous to the time, to make ready for the large influx, and every bed in the two village inns was engaged for the night of the twenty-third.

Sir George was disappointed at not finding his favorite grandson at home to meet him; and to indemnify himself for this disappointment, he solaced himself by dwelling on his perfections to several gentlemen with his accustomary decision and dogmatism, as he walked up and down the long drawing-room with his hands behind him.

"He'll be a great man, sir, one of these days. His father will of course get him into Parliament. He is one of those brilliant intellects, sir, that bear every thing before them. It always was so; from a child he could do any thing he chose. Why I remember—let me see—fifteen years ago—when his mother brought him to Heronhurst—I set him a Latin lesson, the first Latin lesson he ever had, and he took it away laughing; when I tried to explain it to him, he said saucily, 'Oh, grandpapa, I know!' and then he went and sat on the window seat, and kicked his legs about and killed flies. I said

to him, 'You are not learning that, Vernon.' 'Because I know it, grandpa,' he said, sharply; and sure enough he did, and said it as well as you or I, though, to my certain knowledge, he had hardly looked at it."

"Ay, indeed!" said the gentleman. "The most extraordinary part is, that he has grown up according to his early promise. A precocious child seldom becomes a remarkable man; large things are of slow growth."

"He was never forced, sir; he was never forced; and he had good spirits, and liked boys' sports. The danger is, sir, in forcing the intellect. He has been judiciously reared, sir; and the consequence is, his constitution is now established, and he is likely to be a useful and honorable member of society. I am persuaded all depends upon education. People often talk of the will of God, when they are to blame themselves. If they took proper care, adverse things would not happen, in the majority of cases."

Sir George's state of happiness was exceedingly great; he went about the room in the most affable state of mind, to hear Vernon's praises from the many mouths, and was even gracious to Frank and Louis.

The following day Vernon arrived, between lunch and dinner. Sir George was in the morning room with some members of the family, who, as well as himself, had waited at home to receive him, on the chance of his arrival. As the carriage stopped, a troop of little ones, who had caught sight of the approach, rushed out hatless and bonnetless to greet him. He got out quickly amongst them, and several minutes were occupied in the vociferous welcomes and mutual embraces.

"Now, little noisy ones," he exclaimed, as soon as he could disengage himself, "no announcement, if you please; and come quietly up, if you come at all."

He strode across the wide hall into the well-known room. Here his welcome was scarcely less noisy than that previous; every one was so delighted to see him again, and nearly all complimented him on his improved appearance. His mother looked with the tenderest fondness on his slight graceful form and brilliant expression, now lighted up with animation and happiness; and in truth it was a beautiful face when examined, though few on a slight acquaintance would pronounce him handsome.

"Does he not look well?" said Lady Digby, as she resigned the hand she held to her father.

Sir George did not reply. He had taken his grandson's hand and welcomed him heartily, but a change came over his countenance, which a keen observer would have remarked as one he desired to conceal. He held the hand very fondly, and looked at the young man kindly and seriously, but with a half-affrighted and inquiring expression. Vernon was apparently too much occupied to notice his grandfather's unusual manner. He had so many questions to answer, and so much to hear before it was time to dress, and he retired soon, in order to escape the return of the rest of the company before dinner.

Reginald, Louis, and the young people followed his example very shortly, Lady Digby, her sister and brother, remaining a little longer. They sat near a window talking of Vernon, of his improved looks, his high spirits, his affectionate disposition. It was a theme on which Lady Digby loved to emerge, and her companions were quite ready to indulge her by listening and agreeing. Sir George continued walking up and down the room with his hands behind him. Suddenly he stopped before them, and said—

"Vernon look well, Lady Digby? are you blind?"

"How! what do you mean? You alarm me."

"Some one must be alarmed before long," he replied gravely. "I can't tell what you have been thinking of. God help you, Beatrice; you have been *very* blind."

Lady Digby turned deadly pale. "My dear father! what —what do you mean?"

"That Vernon is ill—very ill—fearfully ill," repeated Sir George, emphatically.

Lady Digby and Mrs. Mortimer looked at one another with blanched lips, and then at Sir George, wonderingly.

"Ay, I'm not out of my mind," said the old gentleman. "I know what I am saying. I know it too well. I am sorry to startle you; but you must be awakened. He must be nursed."

"What, father, with that lovely color, looking so remarkably well—looking so handsome?" said Lady Digby, gasping between each word.

"It is even so," replied Sir George, sadly. "Beatrice, I'd —I'd have given—I'd have—I'd have given—I'd give all I possess to save him; but it is too late, I know."

"Father!" exclaimed Lady Digby, bursting into tears, "do not talk so. It is cruel to talk in this way!—indeed, it is cruel."

"You are too desponding, sir," said Mrs. Mortimer, in a tone of assumed cheerfulness.

Sir George never acknowledged himself in the wrong, so he said nothing, but stood looking gloomily and sorrowfully at the sisters. Mr. Vernon roused himself and attempted to cheer his sister's spirits, by hinting that his father was rather apt to take fright; that he thought Vernon was looking better than when he saw him last; and so poor Lady Digby went to dress with a heavy heart, but determined to hope,

and determined to have medical advice at once. She did not tell Sir Francis; she could not bear to alarm him at such a time. After her departure Sir George continued to pace up and down the room in a state of great agitation, murmuring to himself at intervals, "Color! um!—what madness not to have looked to him before! Color—it's a fever-color! Where could they be, not to see his white hands?" and then he shook his head mournfully, his eyes filled with tears, and he took a few turns in silence. "Poor fellow! poor boy! couldn't they see his breath? um! It was not all eagerness—no stairs—um! *my dear boy!*"—he dashed the back of his hand across his eyes.

"Father, you are too much alarmed," said Mr. Vernon, who had been a silent spectator. "You have alarmed yourself unnecessarily."

"God grant it!" he replied. "Clarence, I have lost two sons that way—you remember one—and I know every step."

"I see he is not the thing," said Mr. Vernon; "but I cannot see cause for so much despondency. He was excited; remember how excitable he is; rest and nursing will restore him yet."

"Well, well," said poor Sir George, "he has a good constitution, I've always said, and he got over that terrible illness at Dashwood; perhaps—but they've let it go on too long;—madness, madness!—Lady Digby is always so easy; Emily would have taken better care of him."

He strode hastily out of the room.

Vernon appeared in the drawing-room only just before dinner, and thereby, for a little while, spared himself the weariness of answering a number of common-place inquiries. He singled out a favorite lady, and devoted himself very as-

siduously to her entertainment on the way to the dining-room, and charmed every one at table by the brilliancy of his conversation. His father was so happy, and even Sir George's fears were, for the time, lessened by the sprightly *nonchalance* of his gifted grandson; but neither he nor Lady Digby forgot to notice, amid all the excitement and cares of the dinner, that the contents of his plate were sent away every course, almost untouched. The gentlemen did not remain long at the table, and Vernon and his cousins were the first of the party who entered the drawing-room. Their attentions were so immediately and constantly required, that the evening nearly passed away before Lady Digby had an opportunity of speaking to her son; but her anxious care being now quite aroused, she watched him as constantly as her duties allowed, and was considerably relieved by his unwearied animation and high spirit. "I cannot think what my father means," she said to herself; "I never saw him looking so well, dear fellow!"

When the festivities of the evening were over, Vernon came to his mother in her boudoir to wish her good-night. She looked anxiously at him as she held his burning hand.

"Good-night, *mater carissima!*" he said, in a tone of grave playfulness, almost answering her steady gaze by one as full of meaning from his large liquid eyes.

"You are very hot, my darling."

"How should I be otherwise, mamma? It's a hot night, and hot rooms, and dancing—nothing very wonderful."

"You did not dance very much, my dear: I thought you were dancing rather languidly."

"Who dances otherwise in a quadrille, mater?" he replied. "I've given up waltzes and polkas—they're too much trouble."

"You did not take much dinner after your journey, my love."

"Must I explain how I tasted of every thing, and that the abundance of tastes made an excellent dinner? You have been watching me in a most maternal manner," he answered, looking at her again as if his soul were in his eyes. "Now, what next?"

His mother still looked intently at him.

"Is your cough quite gone?"

"*A merveille*," he replied carelessly.

"How long has it been gone?"

"It seemed to go lately almost suddenly," replied her son gravely, while a sudden expression, as of pain, passed over his face.

"What is the matter, dear?"

"Nothing; the bare recollection of what that cough used to be after I left you," he said with a little laugh.

The laugh produced a slight hollow cough, two or three times repeated, and his mother remarked—

"It is much better, but not well; take care of yourself, dear."

"I'll promise you that," he answered gayly, as he turned to his father, who now entered the room.

"Good-night, father; it is very late or very early."

"Good-night, Vernon," said his father. "Mamma, he looks well, doesn't he? The sea agrees with him. I should be glad to see him a little stouter, though. God bless you, my boy! my proud, my beautiful!" he added, as Vernon left the room.

Lady Digby sighed deeply, but softly; she was not at ease, though her mind was in some measure relieved. She did not know how Vernon had striven against lassitude that

evening to appear well in her eyes, and how, now the spur was removed, he sank exhausted on his bed, where he lay full half an hour before his valet could prevail on him to undress. This valet was a young Frenchman he had brought home with him, and whom he chose to have in constant attendance now, in opposition to his general habits; for till lately he had always expressed his abhorrence of valets in no measured terms, and gloried in being independent. He slept but lightly, constantly tossing about, and disturbed by the cough which had excited so little alarm in his mother.

CHAPTER XI.

"How dreadful must thy summons be, O Death!
To him that is at ease in his possessions;
Who, counting on long years of pleasure here,
Is quite unfurnish'd for that world to come!
In that dread moment, how the frantic soul
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement;
Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help;
But shrieks in vain! How wistfully she looks
On all she's leaving, now no longer hers!"—*Blair.*

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth; while the evil days come not."—*Eccles.* xii. 1.

VERNON arose the next morning unrefreshed, and weary from his troubled feverish sleep, and during his toilet his cough was unusually troublesome.

"Comment, Basire, ma toux revient; donnez-moi la bouteille, et doucement, ne me dérangerez pas."

"Monsieur se fatigue trop," replied the man, as he meas-

ured a dose of the cough mixture, with a considerable tenderness of manner.

"Vous avez raison, Basire, après demain je me délasserai —aujourd'hui c'est impossible, et demain c'est encore plus impossible. Ma fête, vous savez, Basire. Pas un mot de cette toux—comprenez-vous?"

Basire shrugged his shoulders, and signified his comprehension in an undecided manner, as Vernon languidly left the room.

If Lady Digby had congratulated herself on his good looks the preceding evening, she could do so no longer, as his wan face and sunken eyes met her gaze at breakfast. He was too ill to make any effort to appear lively; all he could assume was a cheerful manner.

Sir George was fidgety, and visibly uneasy, and when breakfast was over, he summoned Vernon and his father to a council in another room, beginning by minutely inquiring into Vernon's ailments. He could get but little, however, out of his grandson.

Vernon laughed at the idea of being ill. "He was excited at returning home; had had a bad night—had caught a little cold—there was nothing the matter."

"*Nothing the matter,* with that cough?" repeated Sir George.

"A mere trifle, sir," replied Vernon, with so much indifference in his manner, that his grandfather grew angry.

"You may call it what you please, sir, but it will kill you if you won't take proper care of it. Sir Francis, I should insist upon his seeing Dr. Macey. You hear how he has been coughing this morning; you see how he looks. No comment is needed, and words will be wasted in argument."

"*How I have been coughing!* I haven't been coughing," replied Vernon.

"I have done, sir," said Sir George, majestically. "Were you my son, I should order you out of the room; as you are not, I shall go myself."

"Grandfather, grandfather, forgive me," exclaimed Vernon, hastily placing himself between Sir George and the door. "I am unworthy of your solicitude. I am really sorry. I will go out if you will not stay in the room."

But Sir George put him aside and persisted in retreating, leaving Vernon alone with his parents. He was exceedingly sorry, and went after his grandfather, using all his eloquence to induce him to return, but in vain, and he returned to his father.

Sir Francis quietly but decidedly expressed his intention of summoning Dr. Macey that day, and in the same manner reproved Vernon for his petulance concerning their anxiety.

"That you are not the thing is plain," he said, "or you would think it unworthy to refuse so small a request. I am going to S—— this morning, and will send the doctor myself; and, Vernon, I shall be most seriously displeased if you do not see him. I wish you had come home before. It would have been better to postpone the merry-making till you were quite strong." As Sir Francis went out, Vernon threw himself on a sofa in an agony of vexation.

"I will go out; I *won't* see Dr. Macey. Bored to death with doctors! doctors, is there to be no end of doctors? I had enough of them last year; can't I catch a slight cold without doctors' medicines to cure me?"

Lady Digby attempted to soothe him, and had partially succeeded, when several of the little girls entered in their birthday dresses of white worked muslin, with broad pink

When several of the little girls entered in their birthday dresses.—p. 116.

sashes. They were a pretty little group. Mary Mortimer and Bessie Vernon, dressed exactly like their cousins, were in the advance with Mary Digby, who was about their age, and Fanny, Rosalie, and little baby Laura, brought up the rear.

"Mamma, we've come to show you our new frocks," cried Rosalie. "Vernon, we've got pink, your favorite color; and, mamma, all the boys' dresses have come home, and Charlotte's and Louisa's ball-dresses. Oh, they are so beautiful! Will you come and look at them? Vernon, do come and look at them."

"They are pink crape, with silver flowers on them, Vernon," said Fanny. "Do come into the school-room; they are all there, and Frank, and Reginald, and Louis, and Mr. Meredith, are all there, too."

Vernon did not attempt to resist their persuasions. He lifted the baby on his shoulder, to the great detriment of her new dress, and marched along to the school-room, where the new dresses lay in their glittering beauty. Vernon was called upon to admire every thing, in consequence of all being provided to do him honor. He insisted upon his two eldest sisters arraying themselves in their new robes, and a merry half-hour was spent in descanting on the alterations and additions required from the dress-maker, who had come from S—— with them. May we be allowed to use the word "spent" instead of "wasted," in connection with the half-hour above mentioned, for surely on such an occasion half an hour's sympathy with a young party's pleasure was not misspent time?

"And now do get up, you lazy fellow, and come out," exclaimed Reginald, when the survey was presumed to be finished. As he spoke he suited the action to his words, by

lifting little Laura high in the air, from the end of the sofa on which Vernon was now lying full length, and jumping her on the floor; he then disengaged Rosalie from his feet, and commenced an attack on Vernon, by turning the couch on its side, and rolling his cousin on the floor. "Get up and come out!"

"He's not a lazy fellow," cried little Rosalie, running up to help him. "He's a dear good, kind boy."

"Boy indeed!" exclaimed Vernon, as he recovered his legs slowly, playfully seizing his sister by her arms. "How dare you call me a boy?"

"Well, you won't be a man till to-morrow, you know; Frank said so."

"That's a horrid cram of Frank's," cried Vernon. "He's always talking some absurd nonsense, I wonder you ever believe him; he knows nothing at all about it."

"You are really a man, are you not?"

"Well, to ease your anxious mind, suppose you call me an individual for the next few hours; only after to-morrow, let me hear you at your peril call your eldest brother a *boy* again. High! What, here's Lady Laura coming for more romps. I *tied*, Lady Laura—can't make my head a footstool any more. My arms have not recovered their temporary usage as a crane for hoisting light weights, to say nothing of being almost smothered just now by a very bustling muslin frock, and having my eyes nearly put out with the corner of a sash. No; no more of that, an't please your ladyship—come Reginald, out of the way, if we must go; come."

"Why, you are panting as if you had been jumping over a five-barred gate," said Reginald, as his cousin seized his arm. They made their way out with some difficulty, and it was not till Lady Digby had relieved him by a few ex-

postulatory words, that the children allowed them free egress.

"And now, where are we to go?" asked Vernon.

"I have not seen any thing yet," said Reginald; "I want to walk round the home-park, and see some of your improvements; and there is that beautiful tower your father has been building, in honor of you. He wanted to show me the view from it; but I declined, as I wished to see it with you."

"Come, then, most devoted and fraternal cousin, I shall be happy to act *cicerone*, if my powers of leg do not fail me."

"*Powers of leg!* You prince of laziness! you have grown very weak in your understanding lately. We'll catch a deer, and place you thereon, if you are tired. I see you want me to get you into good habits; you have been with that lazy fellow St. John till you have forgotten that anybody ever does any thing; with your monsieur. I am really afraid of you, Vernon."

"So am I," replied Vernon, coolly. "I am very much afraid of myself. It is really so amazingly comfortable to have things done for us, that I wish a patent walking-machine was invented; one's legs really are not fit for long walks."

"Shall I send for monsieur to carry you, dear boy?"

"Thank you," replied Vernon, nonchalantly; "it would be very comfortable, only he would let me fall to a certainty. Perhaps, if I am too tired to proceed, you and Meredith, as the strongest of the party, will carry me queen's-chair fashion. Is that a bargain before we start, Meredith?"

Meredith, who with Frank and Louis had joined them, laughingly acquiesced.

"I do not know what the rest of the party will think of

us," said Vernon; "but they really must take care of themselves to-day as yesterday without me."

"Arthur and Charles are very devoted," said Frank, "and I shall return soon; so you may make yourself easy on that score."

"I shall be very attentive to-morrow, to make up," said Vernon.

The castle, a large imposing pile of building, originally built in the time of Edward the Third, but considerably altered and modified by succeeding generations, stood a little distance from the summit of one of a range of beautiful hills, which rose around it, nearly covered with trees. A winding road, now and then discernible among the trees, led to it from the park, and immediately along the front of the building was a broad marble terrace, from which a noble flight of steps led to the smooth green ascent below. A wide expanse of rich park-land, and meadow upon meadow, interspersed with cottages and houses of more magnificent pretensions, lay before you as you stood on the terrace, and on one side a considerable parish church, of no remarkable architectural beauty; near which was the parsonage-house and the "Digby Arms," the principal inn of the place,—for Combe Digby, though only a hamlet in name, was of considerable extent, and boasted a High-street of its own. The time of the year and the beauty of the weather were all favorable to the exhibition of the beauties of the place.

Vernon led the way silently with Reginald down the hill to a beautiful dell, which was laid out with much tasteful regard to its uneven propensities. They passed clump after clump of beautiful oaks and spreading beeches, whose color was slightly changed by the breath of autumn. Startled deer occasionally fled from their approach to the shelter of distant

trees, and now and then, as they brushed through the more woody entanglement of shrubs and bushes which guarded the approach to the dell, they roused a hare, or a covey of partridges flew into the air. Reginald thought he had humored his cousin's silent fancy long enough, and, in common with Frank and Meredith, burst into a very sportsman-like ejaculation on the latter apparition.

"What a pity we have no guns!" exclaimed Meredith.

"We are not in a sportive mood just now," said Vernon, quietly; "you had better make a morning of it after to-morrow. My father's preserves are very good, only I must confess I have very little fancy for shooting; I never could learn how to hold a gun properly, and have always a wholesome dread of shooting myself."

"What a shame, with all this abundance!" said Reginald.

"*Chacun à son gout*," replied Vernon, in the same languid tone; "there's all the more for my friends, and you are welcome to come and blaze away as much and as often as you like; and further, if it will afford you any satisfaction, I will give you the inexpressible pleasure of my company on such occasion. *Quant à moi*,"—he murmured, in conclusion, as he glanced at the peep of blue sky the trees permitted to appear.

"How very beautiful this is, Vernon!" remarked Louis.

'I thought it would please you," said Vernon; "it was always a favorite spot of mine. When I was sulky, I came and sulked here; when I was in a dramatic humor, I played Robinson Crusoe here; and many is the time in the vacations I've pretended to be very studious in that seat. This is my willow, Louis."

Louis laughed.

"It is nice," he said, "to have a summer-parlor of our own, is it not, Vernon?"

"For us sentimental ones it is," rejoined Vernon.

"You sentimental!" exclaimed Reginald; "nonsense; you and I row in the same boat, Vernon. You like the open air, and walking, and boating, and all those sort of things; at least you did, only really you've become so abominably lazy. I don't know what else may have come to you."

Vernon smiled, and, making no reply, seemed very well content to remain under any imputation his cousin pleased.

"But, upon my word, this is a beautiful place; we can't show you any thing like it at Dashwood."

"Your grounds are so much more extensive than ours," said Louis.

"Oh! there's no scenery at Dashwood," said Reginald; "it's only a pretty comfortable place."

"It is beautiful," said Vernon, almost absently; "I am much attached to it; and yet I do not think it is entirely the scenery that charms me. We are all creatures of association, Reginald. This dell abounds with the silver birch; and I never see a birch anywhere from home that it does not call forth a very pleasant, and yet a craving feeling,—a kind of craving for that past time when so little charmed me. I am not quite past that yet," he added; "but my desires are getting larger, and I am afraid I am growing more censorious and less easily satisfied; it is the natural consequence of greater experience; but I hope I shall never get into that miserable state of being wearied of every thing."

"Never fear," said Reginald; "you of all others are likely to taste largely of the pleasures of life: really, Vernon, just think—"

"Don't tell him to think," said Meredith; "don't you see

he is in a brown study? *Apropos* of the pleasures of life: I sometimes think that happiness does not always go with the abundance of life's pleasures."

"That is true, Meredith," rejoined Louis; "the happiest persons are often those who have fewest of this life's pleasures."

"I often think that my cup of life is very full of most good things," said Vernon, thoughtfully. "My life is almost too little interrupted by trifles; I never wish for a thing but I get it."

"Too happy!" said Meredith. "You are growing more humble than I used to think you."

"Or more superstitious," said Vernon, in the same quiet tone. "'They whom the gods love die young;' and I believe it, Meredith. An old nurse of mine once said, speaking of her childhood, 'It was so happy, Master Digby, I thought I must really be going to die young.'"

"But she lived to be old, didn't she?" asked Meredith; "so there goes your theory at once."

A hearty laugh was raised at Vernon's expense. He joined in it himself, saying, as it died away,—

"Ah well, so she did; I did not see the fallacy of my illustration."

"You have a fit of the vapors, I am afraid," said Reginald; "walk a little faster, and shake it out of you."

"Not up-hill," said Vernon cheerfully, resisting his cousin's energetic pulls; "I have not recovered my journey."

They were now mounting one of the hills by the winding path that ran round the back of the house; several times Vernon stopped, and the little hollow cough was painfully perceptible even to Reginald.

"Why, Vernon, you are not well," he said, as they stopped

near the brow of the hill, when a few steps more would have placed them at the top.

"I must have taken cold yesterday; my cough has returned a little to-day, but there is not much the matter," he replied, in a low exhausted tone; and after resting a few minutes, he led them to the entrance of the "Vernon Tower," which was completed in honor of his coming of age. A cart and various tools about, showed that the task of clearing the rubbish and beautifying the environs was in progress. The workmen were gone to their dinner, and Vernon and his companions sat down on one of the stone seats placed in the doorway to look at the glorious prospect.

"The prospect is much finer from the top," said Louis. "There is a staircase inside; let us go up."

"Lunch must be ready," said Frank. "It is half-past one."

"'Time was made for slaves,'" said Reginald; "come, Vernon, I have not seen it."

The ascent inside the tower, which was very lofty, was slow and fatiguing; but when the summit was gained, the magnificent panoramic view well repaid the toil,—rich pasture-land, waving corn-fields, thick plantations of trees, houses at intervals, showing a thickly-populated country. The young men stood side by side in silence: Vernon with a swelling heart and full glistening eyes.

"'I am monarch of all I survey,'"

said Reginald playfully, turning to Vernon. "Do you not feel proud that this fair land belonged to your fathers before you, Vernon?"

Vernon smiled, and looked with earnest, lustrous eyes on all around him. But his proud expression faded gradually into

one both mournful and serious. He turned from the others, seemingly wrapped in his own meditations.

"The lot has fallen to you in a fair ground, Vernon," said Louis, whose heart was full, but with different emotions.

"Yea, I have a goodly heritage," replied Vernon, with a sigh.

"I hope you say that in its largest sense," said Louis gently.

Vernon was silent for a moment; he then replied, still looking intently on the distant hills,—"David used it of his inheritance."

"But, surely," added Louis, "David looked beyond his kingdom; for did he not thank God for that when he said, 'What am I, and what is my father's house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto?' he also said, 'The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and my cup: Thou maintainest my lot.' Things pass away so quickly on earth, we need some continuing city, do we not, where we may place our treasures?"

An expression of the most intense sadness settled on Vernon's countenance as Louis spoke, and he replied, still without looking at him,—

"*Vanitas vanitatum, omnia vanitas!* The preacher was a wise man, Louis. 'There is an evil under the sun, and it is common among men; a man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honor, so that he wanteth nothing;' '*wanteth nothing* for his soul of all that he desireth,' he repeated, with bitter emphasis; 'yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof.' 'As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me, and why was I then more wise? For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool forever. And how dieth the wise man? EVEN AS THE FOOL. I looked on the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor I had labored

to do, and behold all was vanity and vexation, and no profit under the sun.'"

Vernon uttered these words rapidly, and there was a bitterness and earnestness in his manner that alarmed and startled Louis; who replied,—

"But the wisdom spoken of there is the 'wisdom of the world, that is foolishness with God,' Vernon. 'The remembrance of the just is blessed:' 'Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him!'"

"What are you two talking of so earnestly there?" exclaimed Reginald, who had been engaged in a merry discussion with Frank and Meredith at the other side. How grave you are! Why, Louis, you look quite frightened."

"As for Vernon, he's in the dumps this morning," said Frank: "the ghosts of his forefathers are haunting him. Never mind, Vernon, don't be heroic; never mind the ancestry. I mean to throw mine overboard, and be sufficient for myself. When I write my personal recollections, I shall commence, 'I was the son of my father, and that was honor enough for me and for him;' and now I'm hungry, and I dare say the company will want me. Meredith, come along: you saw all, and had all your poetry and sentiments called forth yesterday. Come, Louis, come and have some lunch: we'll leave the son and heir in the clouds, as he's inclined to be so mysterious."

Louis followed Frank and Meredith down the staircase; and Vernon, rousing himself, began to point out some places of note to Reginald. The others had not left them many minutes, when the workmen returned. They caught sight of the gentlemen before they reached the tower, and came running up the hill, waving their caps and cheering. As they reached the tower, Vernon and Reginald heard dis-

tinctly, "Hurrah! Long live Mr. Vernon! Our young master forever! God bless our young master!"

Vernon's color rose; his eyes sparkled as he took off his hat, and returned their *vivas* with a low inclination. He descended immediately, and stopped to shake hands with them, and to speak the few kind hearty words, which remained long in their affectionate remembrance, after the tongue that uttered them was silenced. As he proceeded down the hill, many were the fervent blessings invoked on his head, mingled with some pitying remarks on his delicate appearance. There was now but a short distance to traverse before they reached the house; but though it was all downhill to the terrace, when the enthusiasm the rencontre with the workmen had called up had passed away, Vernon seemed quite overcome. He leaned heavily on Reginald's arm, and often paused; but to all Reginald's bantering remarks on his laziness, he scarcely made any reply; and at length Reginald was alive to the fact, that there was something very much amiss, and felt anxious to get him home as quickly as possible. The ascent up the broad steps was fearfully tedious. Vernon's breath seemed almost gone, as they reached the terrace. He staggered across, with Reginald's help, and sat down on one of the little iron seats placed near the buttresses, gasping.

"Dear Vernon, you are very ill. What is it?" said Reginald.

He was afraid to leave him, yet anxious for help, and was going to call out, when Vernon looked up piteously, and just gasped out, "No, don't; I shall be better."

He then bent his head down, and leaned it against the buttress.

For a few minutes Reginald stood in distressed silence, looking at him. At length he drew a deep breath, and

then, looking up at his cousin with his eyes full of tears, he said,—

"It is of no use deceiving myself any longer. I cannot, Reginald. I am sure I AM DYING; and I am a coward, for I dare not be told that I am."

Poor Reginald felt as if his circulation had suddenly stopped, and he could not speak at first; but, soon recovering himself, he replied as cheerfully as he could,—

"Nonsense; you are low-spirited, Vernon: you must not give way in this manner. You have taken cold; but a little cold does not kill one, though it is uncomfortable. Never say 'die,'—it is not like you."

"Therefore," returned Vernon, "you may be sure it is not a little that has made me say it. Reginald, I have much to say, but this is too public a place; let me have your arm up stairs. Stay one moment: promise me that you will never say you saw me in tears. I am so weak, and so broken down, I could not help it; but it is most unmanly."

Reginald, nevertheless, could hardly restrain his own, as he gave the earnestly required promise; he knew how intense must have been the feeling that could draw them from his cousin—for himself especially. He led him in silence through the hall, and they mounted the stairs very slowly, though Vernon exerted himself sufficiently to excite no particular attention among those servants who were standing about. When they reached his room, he rang the bell, and lying down on the bed closed his eyes. Reginald was so bewildered he hardly knew what to do or what he thought, but the speedy entrance of the valet relieved him from his perplexities. Directly Basire saw Vernon, he produced a restorative, and tenderly raising his head, he gave it him. In

a few minutes Vernon appeared much as he had been before the commencement of the walk.

"Merci, Basire," he said, with a smile. "Mon cousin ne connaît pas ces affaires-ci; nous,—nous y sommes accoutumés. Mettez la bouteille sur cette petite table, et puis vous pouvez quitter la chambre. Je désire être seul avec Monsieur."

The servant, with a manner in which affection and concern were blended, did as desired, and left the room with a noiseless tread, after Vernon had further desired that if Dr. Macey called, he should be shown up at once to his room.

"And now, Reginald, I have a long tale to tell you, which I can tell to no one but you. I cannot tell my parents, they are too much wrapped up in me. My grandfather—poor grandfather! he would not break it gently to them. Oh, Reginald! take care of your health. I am sure it is a sin to neglect it. I am heavily punished for my self-will. Take care of beginnings; you are well now, and perhaps have naturally a stronger constitution than I have; but I never thought I could be ill. It seemed nonsense; but oh, what a bitter reality it is now—a full cup of happiness at my lips, it is about to be dashed down forever!"

"My dear Vernon," said Reginald, very earnestly, "what did you mean by saying you had a little cold? What did you mean by trifling about your laziness? Oh, Vernon! if you are so ill, how you have been deceiving us, and why?"

"I have told heaps of lies, I fear," replied Vernon, sighing deeply; "but I hope they will be forgiven: they were on a great emergency to ease myself and those so dear to me, and to whom I am so dear. I persuaded myself it was the case. I would if I could. Don't look so grave; your favorite David did the same in danger."

"And the consequence was the destruction of a number of innocent persons. It ought not to be excused, dear Vernon, and you of all people."

"Well, no more of that," said Vernon, impatiently; "nobody calls excuses and evasions, *lies*. God knows, there was reason enough. Well, here is my story. I believe the mischief was principally done at Torquay, the last night I was there; but I would not believe any thing was the matter, because my time was so valuable. After I returned to Cambridge I was not well, and examining for my degree did not improve it; but I got on till Easter somehow, and then the rest and change did me so much good, that I thought myself quite well, in spite of the cough. You know, Reginald, I was used to the cough by that time. However, it was very bad sometimes, especially in the morning. I used to resolve to have advice in the morning, and think myself quite well at night; and so it went on till the summer came, when I got wonderfully well. Then the Mediterranean was advised, and I expected to be set up, and so I was, partially; this terrible cough had nearly ceased, and all went on pretty well till about a month ago. I was coming home, but I was laid up a fortnight at Brighton. Happily I told no one I was coming, so no one knew. St. John thought me at home, and they at home thought me on board ship."

"Did you not have advice?"

"To be sure, and got well again, and was advised to go to sea again to Madeira; but he was very encouraging, saw no danger, et cetera. Of course I did not care about Madeira, and I went to the Isle of Wight for ten days, and then came here, much better I hoped—much better—but here I am nearly as low and weak as ever. My father insists upon my seeing Dr. Macey, and I dread to see him."

"But I don't see why, if your Brighton man was so hopeful."

Vernon sighed.

"I wished to believe him. I did believe him, Reginald; but yet something continually checked that; and yet I have been very sanguine, not alarmed enough at any time. I am better now," he added, sitting up. "Perhaps, after all, my fears are mere lowness of spirits; I am not generally troubled that way."

"I think so still," said Reginald, cheerfully; "and let me order you something to eat: you will be better then, and all these fancies will fly away."

"Promise me you will say nothing about this till after to-morrow," said Vernon. "My father would put off the festivities, and so many will be disappointed. It must not be, Reginald; they will do me good—a little excitement does."

"But if you are ill, Vernon?"

"But I am not," said Vernon, eagerly; "not ill enough, at least. I have been making a fool of myself. You must promise, Reginald, not to prevent the *fête*, for my sake. Remember, this was in confidence."

Reginald gave a reluctant consent, just as Dr. Macey was announced. At the mention of his name, Vernon colored, and then turned pale; but he commanded himself well, and after a few remarks, begged Reginald to leave him alone for a few minutes. Reginald retired to the adjoining room; but the few minutes were lengthened to half an hour, and when Dr. Macey left the room, Reginald arrested him at the door with a trembling "How is he?"

Dr. Macey's manner was exceedingly agitated; he could hardly say,—

"He cannot live many months, Mr. Mortimer; the disease

has made ground fearfully. Go to him,—keep him up. Oh, that that fine young man should be taken! Poor fellow!—he has been sadly careless of himself; but it is the way of them all."

Reginald possessed much strength of mind; but he needed all, as he mechanically obeyed Dr. Macey, who hastened down stairs and out of the house, without asking to see Lady Digby.

Vernon was lying full length on the bed; his coat and waistcoat were on the floor beside it, and both his arms were laid across his eyes. He did not move when Reginald entered; but, as he approached the bed, he said, in a low muffled voice, "Leave me alone now. I must be quite alone, Reginald,—*quite* alone for a little while."

Reginald could hardly speak; but he mustered his emotion sufficiently to say gently, "You are not fit to be alone, dearest Vernon."

"I am," replied Vernon, suddenly sitting up in the bed, and displaying slight traces of tears on his white haggard countenance. "I must pass *alone* soon; no comfort can reach me there. Reginald, I made him tell me *all;* he speaks the truth; I knew he would, and therefore I dreaded this visit. Oh, my God!" he added, clasping his hands, and looking out on the fair view visible from the window at the foot of the bed, "to leave this,—can it be?—with all youth's dreams unfulfilled. It is impossible!"

"Dear, dear Vernon, calm yourself," said poor Reginald. He hardly knew what to say; a burst of bitter tears seemed almost necessary to himself.

Vernon sat a moment or two in the same attitude without moving.

"This is unmanly, Reginald," he said, at length, getting

off the bed,—"this is most unworthy of a man; but sickness has unnerved me."

"Lie down, dearest Vernon," said Reginald, gently taking his hand, "I will fetch aunt Beatrice."

"That you must not, Reginald; she must not know it yet; the children and tenants must have their day; I can hold out well; I shall be well to-morrow. Say nothing, Reginald," he continued, passionately, "I must have this satisfaction. You have no idea how much better I am from day to day; my illness has been too deceitfully variable throughout. Dr. Macey will be one of the company to-morrow, and will look after me. He has promised to evade the matter till the twenty-fourth; and I,—I shall humor him by wearing a blister to-night. But what does it matter? a dying patient may be humored. Forgive me, Reginald," he added, after a slight pause, "illness makes me petulant; you should have left me alone."

Reginald laid his hand very tenderly on his arm.

"Come, lie down, my dear Vernon; I will promise any thing, if you will rest."

"Promise me that; or, rather, remember your previous promise, and I will do any thing. I will take care of myself," said Vernon, throwing himself again on the bed, and again sitting up.

"Oh, Reginald! Aristotle and Plato will not help us much here. Oh, Reginald! philosophy will not do. 'How dieth the wise man? even as the fool! Surely I have spent my days for naught!'"

"Look above, dear Vernon," said Reginald, in a choking voice; Jesus will help. He *alone* can soothe the dying bed. His entire righteousness can save the sinner. His finished work is enough even for the chief of sinners."

"Ay," said Vernon, bitterly; "but I don't feel myself a sinner. How would you have me come and ask a favor—and such a favor—in a last extremity, of one whom I have slighted or despised all my life? I cannot, Reginald; I am, at least, no hypocrite; religion has, as yet, had no charms for me; and should I not despise myself, and doubt my own sincerity, if I should seek it now, when *nothing else* can charm or help me? God is too great to be trifled with, Reginald."

"He is LOVE, Vernon," said Reginald, earnestly. "'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.'"

"But if I were in health, Reginald, or likely to live, I should not wish to come to Him; and is it not cowardice to desire it now?"

"Cowardice! dear Vernon? *Cowardice* to acknowledge His greatness?—that He is God, and not man, therefore He will have mercy even in the eleventh hour. I do not know how to speak to you, my dear cousin; it is adding sin to sin to doubt Christ's mercy, and to stand aloof in pride. Is it not something like the Israelites: 'Thou saidst there is no hope; no, for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go?' Pray, dear Vernon; HE will give you all the *feelings* you want, as well as the gifts. Pray, dear Vernon; it will do you more good than any thing I can say. Make your requests for Christ's sake; there is a plea at once. You are too sinful to ask; but Christ is all holiness; in Him the Father is 'well pleased.'"

"*Pray!*" said Vernon, bitterly; "I, who tumble into bed every night, and go about my business every morning without a prayer? Will He not laugh at my calamity? He will not hear me. I must eat the fruit of my own way, Reginald. Tell me nothing more now, at least; I cannot bear any thing now. I can give myself chapter and verse for every doubt.

I know the Bible better than you do, and I remember it,—indeed, I remember much of it now. Leave me, my dearest Reginald, I want quiet,—I want quiet; I have gone through much to-day."

Reginald obeyed the eager, craving command. But Vernon called him back again to request he would not go near his mother, nor let it be known that they had returned from their walk.

"Have some lunch upstairs, Reginald; you have had nothing to eat yet. I shall be down at dinner. How thoughtless I have been about you!"

Reginald acquiesced, and sadly returned to his own room.

Full three hours elapsed before he was again summoned, and it was nearly seven o'clock when he re-entered his cousin's room. Vernon was now quite calm and collected, and spoke with his usual cheerfulness to Reginald, asking his assistance to help him on with his coat.

"Basire has just dressed me, but I wanted to see you; I dismissed him, thinking you would help me. I have a slight impediment in the shape of a blister between the shoulders. It is not very troublesome now; I put it on as soon as it arrived, that the business might be over early to-morrow. I look pretty well, I think, now," he said, smiling. "Now, if you are dressed, we will go down."

Reginald did not dare to dispute his wishes, for fear of exciting him, and they descended to the drawing-room. Though they had timed their descent only a few minutes before dinner, there was time enough to receive many questions, and to be obliged to parry some, on their morning's walk. Sick at heart, Reginald could not assume the animation of his cousin; and knowing little of his disease, he wondered at the astonishing cessation of his cough, the

beauty of his color, and the fire of his eyes that evening. He did not dance, nor join the musical efforts after dinner, but all that struck any one was that he seemed a little tired.

Lady Digby stopped him at night to ask whether Dr. Macey had been, and what was his report; and received a careless answer, though the question rent his heart.

"Just as I expected. You will see him, I dare say, on Friday, and you can ask him all. He thinks I want care, mother," he added, more gravely; "and I am going to be very good, I assure you."

"I wish we had put off your birthday, dear," said his mother, anxiously.

"I don't," said Vernon. "It would be a great disappointment to me. Have not I been looking forward to it for eighteen years? Good night, *dearest* mother."

"He does not look ill to-night, though," said Lady Digby to herself as he went, yet she sighed very deeply.

CHAPTER XII.

"By grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."—*Ephes.* ii. 8.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not."—*Eccles.* xii. 1.

Basire slept in the same room with his master, and the blister was attended to early in the morning, full an hour before a band of music, simultaneously with the fine peal of church-bells, struck up under Vernon's window. He was much relieved; his cough had been better during the night,

and the fever was considerably abated. Forgetting his invalid condition, and the caution of his medical man concerning the morning and evening air, he threw on his dressing-gown with his usual impetuosity, and hurried to the window to acknowledge the early salutation. Basire was on the watch, knowing but too many instances of his master's imprudence, and as Vernon's hand was on the latch of the large casement, he rushed forward and respectfully interfered.

"Monsieur, le brouillard. Rappelez-vous Monsieur le docteur?"

But Vernon's enthusiasm and self-will both rebelled: he struggled; the poor valet, firm to the injunction he had received from Reginald and Dr. Macey, still persisted in his well-meant resistance, only adding exasperation to his determination. Vernon's anger gave him a fictitious strength; he pushed the man aside, and burst the window open in triumph. It was but a short triumph. An exclamation from him called the valet once more to his side; a short cough and a gush of blood from the mouth announced a broken blood-vessel. The poor young man was sobered and alarmed; he staggered to the nearest chair, and endeavored to stanch the bleeding with his handkerchief. The alarmed servant rang the bell violently, but before he could reach Vernon, the great exhaustion attendant on the hemorrhage had laid him prostrate. Reginald was the first who entered, and he assisted Basire to lay his fainting cousin on the bed, and then sent him for a doctor.

It was not long before other members of the family poured in, for Basire had spread the news as he ran. Sir Francis, Lady Digby, and Sir George were there almost immediately, in agony. What could they do? It was a sight for the birthday morning! All thought him dying. He had not

moved after he was laid on the bed: the stained dressing-gown and pillow, the white, white face, the closed eyes, and the slow drops oozing from his half-open mouth, all told the sad tale. After the first alarm, and the consequent indescribable confusion had a little subsided, they all looked on in silence. Sir Francis raised his head, and Lady Digby gave him a little water; Reginald made a way among the attendant crowd, that the air from the still open window might fan him. There it came, and borne along on it came the music of the merry bells in honor of the dying youth. Sir Francis looked distractedly from his dear son, and laying his head on the pillow, exclaimed,—

"Stop those bells! Some one go, quick!"

There was no lack of messengers, and a few minutes after, one burst into the belfry with the appalling news—

"Mr. Vernon's dying! Stop the bells."

Every thing was arrested hurriedly; each guest ere he had left his chamber knew the sad tale, and in the course of the day all but the immediate relations of the family had left the castle. The village doctor arrived shortly, and about two hours after Dr. Macey, when the object of their solicitude was a little revived. But he lay little removed from insensibility all the day, constantly attended by his parents, Dr. Macey, and Mrs. Mortimer, who knew more of nursing than her sister. Sir George, too, would not be forbidden the room: he stood the picture of woe at the foot of the bed, very quietly watching all that was done for him, once or twice saying, in a low tone, "Poor fellow, I was angry with him yesterday."

Ah! at such times how bitter is the remembrance of an angry thought! Though Sir George had some cause for his anger, his was bitter; and how much more when the anger is without a cause!

There was a slight improvement towards the end of the day, and the next still more. He was not allowed to speak, and he made no effort to do so. He fixed his eyes, from time to time, upon one or the other of his attendants: at times there was an intensity of affectionate gratitude in the gaze, but generally it was one of settled melancholy. Earnest were the prayers offered for him, and no opportunity was lost of repeating texts from the Bible to him, but he seemed not to notice them, either too weak to comprehend or too indifferent. One morning he looked anxiously around from one to the other. Mrs. Mortimer, Lady Digby, and Sir George were all in the room, and as each in turn came to the bedside he slightly shook his head. At last by a great effort he said, "Louis."

Louis had been so much overcome, that his mother had not allowed him to see Vernon often since the birthday; he was soon summoned now, and immediately appeared. Vernon smiled sadly, and taking his hand, signed him to stoop down to him. When Louis was near enough to hear, he said, in the low whisper in which he had spoken since the fatal morning, "Tell me something, Louis; tell me something. The Bible, Louis—all is dark."

Louis felt such a sensation of choking in his throat, that at first he could hardly comply. He sent up a heartfelt prayer for guidance and strength, and then gradually gaining power as he proceeded, repeated passage after passage from the Sacred Word to his poor cousin, whose eager eyes were fixed on him as if he would drink in all he could say. At length he paused, after concluding a passage from the fifteenth of the first Epistle to the Corinthians.

Vernon looked unsatisfied, and pulled him down again.

"There is nothing," he whispered. "O Louis, the heavens above are as brass! I *cannot* believe, I *cannot* feel."

"'Faith is the gift of God,' dear Vernon."

"Too late," murmured Vernon.

"No, no. It is yet the accepted time, dear cousin. Pray, dear Vernon; pray."

Vernon shook his head, and turned away from Louis.

"Remember the laborers of the eleventh hour," urged Louis.

"They labored; I cannot," said Vernon.

"We are not saved by works, Vernon. 'By grace ye are saved.'"

"'Through faith,'" murmured Vernon: "I have none."

"'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come!'" repeated Louis.

Vernon shook his head again, and restlessly moved his hands.

"Remember the dying thief;" and Louis repeated with a faltering voice, Cowper's beautiful hymn,—

"There is a fountain fill'd with blood."

To his great alarm, Vernon raised himself in bed for a minute, and said, in a voice just distinct enough to be beyond a whisper,—

"It is like offering the blind and lame for sacrifice, to give myself to God now—*now!*"

He sank down exhausted, and Louis was obliged to recall his nurses from the adjoining room, whither they had retired to leave him alone with the invalid. They dared not allow the conversation to be renewed. Vernon made no allusion to what had passed, when alone with his mother and aunt; but his poor mother knew the anguish of spirit which those

beseeching eyes betrayed. He was too weak to affect disguise, and he looked, now and then, from one to the other as if he would say, "Give me some comfort;" and they could not give it. It was a great relief when he sank into a heavy slumber, which lasted some time. When he awoke he asked for Louis, and for the next day or two seemed hardly comfortable when he was out of sight; though, with his usual consideration for others, he would not allow him to be constantly in his room. They were often left alone for a short time, when it was found Louis was so precious, and Vernon made him pray aloud, and would sometimes put his thin hand into his cousin's, as if he wished to make the words his own, but he seldom made any remark.

One day, about a week after the breaking of the blood-vessel, when Reginald and Lady Digby were with him, and he appeared to be sleeping, he suddenly opened his eyes, as if some vision of brightness had passed them. He clasped his hands, and murmured,—

"'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; is not this a brand plucked from the burning?'"

His attendants listened with trembling joy. Reginald rose, and stood looking at him; but he closed his eyes again, and seemed lost in contemplation, his lips occasionally moving. Presently he looked steadily at Reginald, and said distinctly,—

"'And he said unto them that stood by, Take the filthy garments from him.'"

"His mind is wandering," said Mrs. Mortimer, as she watched the vacant expression of his gaze. "Who is that, Vernon?"

"'I will praise Thy name, because Thou hast done it,'" said Vernon again. There was something very solemn in

the words uttered by the small weak voice, while the speaker seemed so unconscious of the realities around him; he seemed to try to collect himself; "That Aunt—Reginald—Aunt. *Dear* mother, you know the cup of cold water. What a comfort Louis has been to me!"

"My darling," said his mother, "are you resting on your Saviour? are you able?"

The question did not seem to reach him in its full meaning, for the mind seemed partially disturbed. Presently he said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy upon me! God has been merciful to me a sinner. Oh, wonderful love!"

They stood around in mingled dread and gratitude, and in a little while he roused himself more perfectly, and spoke with more strength.

"Dearest mother! dear aunt! how long you have been watching a poor self-willed sinner! I want to see my father, and poor grandfather. Every one, mother. There's a strange feeling in my head; but I am not alarmed," he added calmly.

It was not long before Sir George and Sir Francis, with some of the elder members of the family, arrived. Vernon held out his hands to them, and looked unutterable affection at his father.

"Forgive all my petulance, dear father—dear grandfather. I have caused you much sorrow, all by my self-will, and I have suffered much; but that is gone. Louis!" the strange wild expression passed over his face, and, apparently unconscious of his weakness, he made a great effort to collect his thoughts, and thanked them all for their kindness.

"I have an humble hope.—Oh, all remember, seek God before the evil days come."

He attempted to speak again, but his speech grew inco-

herent, and after another vain effort, he closed his eyes for sleep, as though no one were present. Sir Francis knelt in speechless grief at the head of the bed, and took the small passive hand again. Mr. Mortimer, inviting all present to join, commended the dying youth to his God, thanking him for the peace they trusted he had found at last. It was very solemn, but joy was even in the midst, among those who had longed for his soul's safety. Before the prayer was concluded, Vernon, who had appeared quite unconscious, was in a sweet slumber. It lasted for several hours. He woke towards midnight, and asked for some water, but there was no recognition of the presence of his relations. His wandering mind strayed on the passages that had come upon him with the dawn of light, in his last hours. As he finished the water, he murmured—

"They set a fair mitre on his head. Lead me to living fountains—the Lamb shall do that. If thou knewest the gift of God. Mother, the gift of God is eternal life!"

His unwearied watchers caught many disjointed fragments of texts; but he sank to sleep again without any consciousness of their attention, and in that long sleep of many hours, his spirit passed away.

We will not lightly touch on their grief. It was not sorrow without hope, and it left abiding impressions. Sir Francis did not soon forget his beloved son's last words, and when the first bitterness of his heavy grief was over, he sought earnestly to lead his household more in the fear of God than he had ever thought necessary. One strong tie that bound him to earth was removed, and in after years he blessed the Hand that had taken his idol.

Young reader, remember NOW thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before the evil days draw nigh. The evil day

may be sudden—there may be no time to call, "God be merciful to me!" In that dread hour of darkness and dismay, what can support the trembling sinner but the blood of Jesus? It has been justly observed, "The Bible gives one instance of death-bed repentance, that *none* may despair, and *but one*, that none may presume. You *cannot* believe of your own will. This is 'the gift of God.' If you refuse Him that speaketh now, offering you that gift, He may refuse it to you in your hour of need. Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter, and shall not be able, when once the Master of the house hath shut to the door."

CHAPTER XIII.

"When now mature in classic knowledge,
The joyful youth is sent to college."
J. Warton.

Months rolled away. Arthur Digby had passed his final examination, and taken honors,—inferior, indeed, to those of his brother, but the more honorable to him, as he belonged to a college which had the unenviable reputation of doing little. Meredith and Reginald pursued their studies with a moderate degree of application; and Frank, after drawing on himself censure in various ways for a few terms, concluded his career at Cambridge, by being presented with a *liceat migrare*, in consequence of a practical joke played off on one of the dons.

Arthur Digby's twenty-first birthday passed quietly, the festivities being confined solely to the tenantry, the family

leaving the castle for a month, and spending the Christmas season quietly at a small watering-place. When it was decided that Louis's health was sufficiently established, and that he had attained a sufficiently mature age to brave the fatigues and fascinations of the university, the grand difficulty to be settled was where he was to be placed. Mr. Mortimer had hitherto, for many reasons, given the preference to Cambridge, though retaining a natural yearning for Oxford, which was his own university. Many of Reginald's friends and relations were at Cambridge, and its vicinity to Dashwood rendered it the more desirable for his eldest son, especially as Mr. Mortimer dreaded the baneful effects of the doctrine promulgated at Oxford. Yet, although the latter reason would seem to hold good more in Louis's case than Reginald's, Louis's tastes and acquirements pointed to Oxford as the university best calculated to call them forth ; and as Reginald had already passed half his time, there was less inducement to place him with his brother ; whereas Hamilton and many of Louis's schoolfellows were at Oxford. Finally, as Louis's own wishes all went south, Mr. Mortimer decided on gratifying him ; and his father's old college being chosen, his name was placed on the books.

The summer that saw his nineteenth year completed was destined for his matriculation ; and his father availed himself of the opportunity afforded by a long-promised visit to an old friend near Oxford, and took Louis up with him. A few days after their arrival at ——— House, they set off in an open carriage to the renowned city, which was ten miles distant.

"Oh, father!" exclaimed Louis, as they drew near the end of their journey, and were entering Oxford by the London road,—"Oh, father ! what a beautiful place it is ! Tell me,

can I see my college? What towers are those?—and that dome? It is far more beautiful than Cambridge. It seems as full of trees as Norwich; but Norwich cannot boast those towers and that dome."

Mr. Mortimer was very ready to explain all his son desired, and was in the midst of the information as to which was the Radclyffe Library, which All Souls, and which Christ Church, when a sweep of the road materially altered their view, and, passing Maudlen Bridge, they were driving up High-street at a rapid rate. Here Louis was so entranced, that he forgot to speak; and it was not till he was fairly set down at the "Mitre" that he expressed to his father his conviction that he had never seen so beautiful a street, and that Oxford far exceeded all his expectations.

Freshmen! ye will excuse the many bewildering sensations,—the sort of rapturous awe,—the feeling of conscious dignity that he was to belong to that city, to make one of its numerous gownsmen, whom he now thought of as almost superior beings. At any rate, I may be excused for supposing that a youth of nineteen had not risen quite superior to them.

"Well, Louis," said his father, when he had given his directions respecting the carriage, "now to business. We have much before us; and, first, we must find out my old friend, your future tutor, Louis."

Louis was standing an intent spectator of the passers-by.

"Father, I believe I saw Trevannion just now; and, look, surely that *is* Charles Clifton."

He was about to dart after the retreating figure, when it suddenly disappeared; where, he was not quite certain, for he was at some distance on the opposite side of the way.

"Come, I cannot afford time for chases after your schoolfellows now," said his father. "Come along."

A few minutes' walk brought them to —— College, and here they repaired to the tutor's rooms. Mr. Mortimer was warmly welcomed by his old friend, to whom Louis was, of course, duly introduced. Shall we be allowed to say that his feelings on this introduction were of a very similar description to those which possessed him in the ancient days of his boyhood, when set down at the door of Ashfield House; but his inexperienced imagination on the subject of college authorities, was considerably modified by the plain, courteous, and polished manners of the gentleman now before him, who, so far from having all his sympathies with the outer world rubbed off by his long, deep classical studies, had yet a smile and a tone of interest for the young aspirant's admiration of scenes so familiar to himself. They did not remain long in inaction, time being precious; and after a little conversation, the principal subjects of which were our hero's admission and immediate matriculation, Mr. L—— turned to Louis, and asked what books he had been reading lately; and having made it at length clear to his mind that he spoke of Latin and Greek authors, he produced a copy of Æschylus, and opening it in the middle of "Prometheus Vinctus," desired him to construe a few lines, and, after asking some questions, expressed himself satisfied, and gave him ten lines of an English work, which lay on the table, to turn into Latin. Louis did not find his task so hard as he expected, and was agreeably relieved to learn that this concluded the inquiry; and having further signified his willingness to swear to the Thirty-nine Articles, they set out on the important business. The first step was to procure a cap and gown; and this being done at the nearest tailor's, they wended their way to the convocation-house. It mattered little to Louis that his father was too much engaged to talk to him during the promenade

thither; he had food enough for thought all the way in the buildings, and would willingly have lingered longer in Radclyffe-square; but here business commenced of which Louis had afterwards very little clear consciousness, for he afterwards told Mary, who was very anxious to hear all the proceedings, that he did not know what was said or done; the ceremony might have been in Greek or Hebrew, for any thing he knew to the contrary, as he was too much overcome by the part he was taking to be aware of more than the fact that he kissed a book, signed his name, and, obedient to a hint from Mr. L——, he retraced his steps, and found himself again at the college-gates before he fully realized his new position. As it wanted yet some time to the dinner-hour, and as Mr. Mortimer had one or two flying calls to pay, —one especially on Frank Digby, who had lately come up to reside at Oxford in Louis's college,—he bid adieu to Mr. L—— here, with the understanding that they should meet at five, Mr. L—— having informed Louis where he would find a place and dinner at that hour. Not being aware of the predilection the "men" possess for tattered gowns and battered caps, Louis marched along in his new-blown splendor, unconscious that the long leading-strings, whose use he could not comprehend, should, to make a man of him, have been cut off. However, it signified but little, for his very new appearance, and undisguised admiration of every thing around him, betrayed him as a *very* freshman at once. Frank was out; and when every thing was done that had been contemplated, Louis and his father retraced their steps. The streets were now full of men returning from their walks and rides, and Louis carefully scrutinized the faces he passed, to catch sight of one familiar to himself. For some time his search was vain; but as they came upon Carfax church, he suddenly

caught sight of an elegant figure, whose aristocratic bearing and beautifully chiselled features were unmistakable, even after four years' distance of time. Louis darted from his father across the street with a welcome on his lips, but the stately figure swept by without appearing to see him, and, meeting a friend, proceeded at a slower rate down St. Aldate's. Louis stood a minute in rather indignant surprise, and it required all his father's eloquence to persuade him that Trevannion had not seen him.

Mr. Mortimer and Louis parted near the hall entrance, and the dinner-bell ringing at the moment, Louis was left to make his *entrée* alone. As he stood doubtfully at the door, the men began to pour in, and screwing his courage to the sticking-point, he timidly stepped into a noble apartment, of somewhere between forty and sixty feet long, and thirty feet broad. It was lighted by windows of the Perpendicular style, which began about half-way up the wall, and was hung round with numerous portraits of benevolent founders and great guns. On each side of the wall, and down the middle, were ranged the tables, with stout forms of the same dark oak as the panellings of the room; and at the further end was the fellows' table, at which Louis presently saw his father, and which seemed to him a species of royal dais, so little did he feel himself in the assemblage, and so utterly indifferent did every one seem to his presence. He had completely forgotten all the directions given him, and was about to take a seat at the lowest end of the lowest table, when a well-known voice and merry laugh, which at this juncture sounded most musically, told him of his cousin's vicinity, and the next minute Frank had led him to another table, and placed him comfortably near himself. He was scarcely seated, when a solitary knock, followed by an

immediate rising of the men, drew him again to his feet, and after a few indistinct words, mumbled somewhere, which he concluded was a grace, he with the others reseated himself. A bill of fare was next put into his hand, and having made choice of his dish, he was speedily served therewith, and after a few minutes ventured to look round and listen to conversation, which at first had to him been an indistinguishable Babel. Opposite to him sat a very solemn, demure-looking man, apparently several years older than any at the table. He said but little, except when roused by his neighbors, or occasionally by a satirical-looking man on Louis's left hand, whose tone and manner had annoyed our hero several times, from its sarcastic causticity: he felt almost afraid of being the object of his ridicule. Between him and Frank there seemed to be some intimacy, and they bandied jokes, and drew out alternately the ludicrous points of their *vis-à-vis*.

Louis's attention was presently absorbed by a tale of some inexperienced equestrian, related with considerable humor by his satirical companion, whose name he soon discovered to be Ford; but the noise increased so much, that eager to lose nothing, he caught only disjointed fragments, and Ford possessing the loudest voice, his story was most prominent. It died away amidst plaudits of "very rich," "bravo," "very good." "Perfectly luscious, as Halhed says of the moon; eh, Halhed? What's that? what's that?"

"Some monkish reason why the weather has been so fine this month," returned the gentleman addressed.

"Let us hear it, Halhed."

The solemn gentleman, who had been uttering a few sentences in an oracular tone, replied as sententiously as before,—

"Prima, secunda nihil, tertia sicut.

"Quarta, quinta qualis—tota luna talis."

"A sconce! a sconce!" cried Ford. "Benson, a sconce here."

The senior commoner, thus appealed to, broke off a sentence short, to inquire of Mr. Halhed whether he denied it.

"*In toto*," replied Mr. Halhed, indignantly.

"Ford, please to enlighten us."

Ford repeated the distich, while Frank remarked on Halhed's reply to Louis, that he happily just stopped short of another sconce.

"A sconce for Mr. Halhed," called Mr. Benson to the attendant waiter.

"I shall appeal!" exclaimed the indignant Mr. Halhed. "That does not come under the statute. It is no quotation."

"I am afraid the heads will think you a bad scholar, if you don't call that Latin, Halhed," said the senior.

"You will make yourself ridiculous," said another. "They gave it against you last time."

"Come now, you can't be obdurate," said Hamilton, as a huge silver tankard was placed before him, full of frothing ale.

To Louis's great amusement, the sconced martyr lifted the tankard with one hand, and touching the liquid with his lips, sent it up to the senior, who performed the ceremony with equal agility, and apparently with much greater zest, as he dived much deeper into its contents. The tankard was then passed gradually round the table, till it reached Louis, who, with a heightened color, was about to pass it on to Frank without tasting, when Ford cried out,—

"Come, you are not to be excused; when we are at Rome, et cetera."

"You must taste it, Louis," said Frank, with a wicked smile.

Louis raised it with both hands, and ere he had tasted the ale, several voices laughingly called out, "A sconce here, Benson." The color deepened on Louis's face, and he put down the tankard with an inquiring look at his cousin, who seemed the merriest of the merry at the trap into which he had fallen. "Why?" he asked, but with a perfectly good-tempered manner; but before Frank could inform him that he had used both hands to the tankard, contrary to all established custom, Mr. Benson had politely excused Louis as a non-resident.

"You are a fortunate man," said Ford, as Frank removed the tankard. "You will not be caught again."

Louis was not sorry when dinner was concluded. Frank showed him the way to the common room, where he had been desired to join his father. On his entrance he was invited to the table, where his father was seated, and a hope having been expressed that he had made a good dinner, he was supplied with a glass of fine old port, and left to amuse himself by taking a mental inventory of the comfortable room and its occupants for the benefit of home, while his father and Mr. L. discoursed very eloquently on thirds and scouts, and lectures, and private tutors. He was perhaps a little relieved to find how very much like other men the fellows were, and how they could talk of horses and politics without a single Latin or Greek word, his own imaginings having led him to suppose that these erudite men never spoke of any thing but classic authors, or the roots of words, or uttered a sentence in the vernacular when not called on to descend to the comprehension of an unlettered stranger. One of the party especially attracted Louis's attention; this was

a queer-looking little man, carelessly attired, who gave utterance occasionally to dry remarks, striking from their oddity and pithiness. There was a world of kindliness in his small twinkling eye, which Louis met fixed on him more than once, till at length, when Louis blushed at being caught so often looking that way, he addressed a few words to him, and after our hero's modest reply, asked if he had any friends in Oxford.

Louis answered in the affirmative, mentioning his "cousin" and a "very intimate friend."

"Umph! indeed," said the old gentleman, holding up his glass to the light, and looking over it to Louis. "And who may your cousin be, and your 'intimate friend?' if you have no objection to name them."

Louis mentioned Hamilton and Frank, and the old man's countenance brightened, as he said,—

"Mr. Hamilton is a credit to his college;" but the smile lingered on his face, though he did not speak of Frank.

Louis at length ventured to inquire if he knew Frank.

"Umph! I suppose I know most of the 'men,' as they call themselves. Poor boys,—I hope you and I shall be friends some day; but perhaps you think, like some of the *harum scarum* fellows of the day, that you come up for fun, and go home to read,—eh?"

"I hope not," replied Louis, smiling.

"Ay, so they all say,—umph!" said the gentleman, with a slightly satisfied glance at the modest blush on Louis's countenance. "Take care and keep close to your intimate friend; he'll keep you up to the mark. As for the other—poor lad,—he came from Cambridge, I hear:—umph!—very unsettled, never do any good."

He murmured something to himself; but in spite of his

sweeping censure on Frank, Louis felt sure that, as usual, his incorrigible cousin had somehow worked himself into his good graces. There was a slight pause, and Mr. Royston sipped his wine, and looked at Louis, and then asked what he had seen at Oxford; and, little by little, drew him out, till Louis was surprised to find how much he was talking, and how many questions he had asked about the birthplace of Cœur de Lion, the residence of Henry Beauclerc, the college used for a mint in the reign of Charles the First; that which had sent forth Erasmus, Laud, Dr. Arnold, and others, with many other particulars, which were all satisfactorily answered in a few words, with now and then a little anecdote annexed. Louis had almost forgotten the awful presence in which he was, when the time arrived for him to leave; and after thanking Mr. L. for his assistance, and Mr. Royston for his attention to Louis, Mr. Mortimer departed for the Mitre, and on the way informed Louis that his friend Hamilton took pupils, and that he meant to try to secure his services as private tutor for him. Louis then added his mite of news, more interesting to himself than to his father, that Charles Clifton had gained a scholarship; "and do you know, father, he was the youngest candidate, and quite astonished the examiners. That old gentleman who talked so much to me, told me that his competitors were *no babies*. I always thought Charlie would do something for himself."

"That old gentleman," replied Mr. Mortimer, "is the mathematical tutor; and I am afraid, therefore, will not stand very high in your favor."

"I like him," said Louis, smiling, "however much I may dislike his likings."

We have already, more than on one occasion, minutely described the arrival at Dashwood Priory; our readers will

therefore permit us to plead want of space in excuse for omitting the recital of Louis's return from Oxford, and the long tale he had to tell his willing auditors, and allow us merely to mention, that in a few months a letter came from Mr. L., to inform Mr. Mortimer that, a vacancy having occurred, Louis could come up into residence. Parting for school and college had been of so common occurrence for some years, that the affectionate little party bore their separation as quietly as could be expected. There was great combination in the packing of his luggage: over and over again were their contents displaced, to make room for some indispensable and forgotten article; and when all seemed ready, the night before he set off, Mrs. Colthrop suddenly declared her belief that no preserves were packed up, and forthwith ordered another box down to contain them. Then some groceries were to fill the interstices between the pots, in case dear Master Louis, who was so absent,—dear young gentleman, should forget to buy his necessaries; and at last, after stowing away four times as many things as Reginald would ever have put up with, his luggage was declared to be quite ready. The last evening was very cheerfully spent; as Louis now and then reminded them he should only be away seven weeks. But there was, nevertheless, a little sinking of the heart,—a little fear of the temptations of his new life; not, perhaps, the less that his father looked many times anxiously at him, and his mother was less cheerful than usual. They did not forget in that little family circle, where all their affairs were committed to the gracious Orderer of all events, to remember him especially that night. It was settled that Mr. Mortimer should accompany his son to Oxford, and arrange the final matters concerning his rooms: they were to set off early the next day for London, concluding their long journey the following after-

noon. The next morning their plans of operation were materially altered; for unexpected parish matters peremptorily demanding Mr. Mortimer's presence the day Louis was to commence his college life, he was, much against his will, obliged to send Louis alone from Norwich.

"God bless you, my boy," he said, as he shook his son's hand; "I hope to be with you in a day or two. You will be able to manage tolerably, I hope. Perhaps your friend Hamilton will help you."

Louis set off once more on a long, lonely journey, often recalling that anxious inquiring look he had met the previous evening from his parents, and mentally resolving and praying that no ill conduct of his should ever bring sorrow upon them.

CHAPTER XIV.

"So he poked up the flame,
And got out the tea;
And down they both sat,
As prepared as could be."
Leigh Hunt.

Behold Louis safely at the gates of his college at half-past five o'clock on a rainy October afternoon, bewildered and anxious to reach the habitation he could call his own, quite unconscious, in his eagerness to leave the "Mitre," where he had been taking a hasty dinner, that he had given a couple of packages in charge of the porter which did not belong to him, in exchange for an equal number of his own. Having at length discovered which were his rooms, his luggage was

conveyed thither, and he was left to his solitary reflections. His first care was to examine his apartments. The room into which he first entered was panelled with dark oak, and possessed a venerable casement window, whose romantic proportions quite accorded with our hero's organ of veneration. But here the charm ceased. The furniture, concerning which he had heard so much about "thirds" on a former occasion, was by no means of a first-rate description; and however much Louis might have tolerated the smoky ceiling, as consistent with the antique whole, he by no means admired the dingy faded window-curtains, the miserably stained carpet, and the rickety chairs that adorned the sitting-room. "Why, I do declare!" he said to himself, "I do declare they must have been smoking very much here; surely when my father comes I shall have a new carpet. Oh, here's plenty of room for books though, and I shall put my piano here. How kind it is of dear father to let me have a piano!"

Louis paused in his survey, as his thoughts rapidly carried him back to home, and he remained in rather a painful reverie, looking on the spot where the piano in imagination stood. Rousing himself, he next proceeded to an inspection of the two cupboards the room contained, and concluded with a minute survey of his sleeping-room. With the latter he was not much charmed, either with the size of the room or the appurtenances thereof, and wondered, in a low voice, several times, "How it was possible to dress in such a closet." But not being of an unhappy disposition, after scrutinizing all for some minutes, he returned to the outer room, determining to make the best of circumstances.

"How very quiet it is!" he thought. "That is a great comfort; but I suppose the men are not all in yet."

It was rapidly growing dusk, and Louis turned to the dim

fire, and wondered where he should get candles, when the scout was coming, and then looked for the poker. There was none, and the fire was very low. Louis waited patiently, divested himself of his great-coat, kicked the gasless coals with his toe, and finally sat down in the window. He would have begun to unpack, but he could not see to put away his things; and besides, he was tired, and did not feel much inclined to litter his room in every direction with jam-pots, linen, and broadcloth. Patiently he sat, still hoping each minute would bring the scout; but the faint light gradually faded away, the dim fire sunk lower and lower, and the room, though not positively cold, was chilly and very desolate. He wandered round the room in desperation, looking and feeling in every corner for the signs of a bell, but could find none.

"How am I to get this man?" he murmured. He looked once more out of the window, but all he could discern in the uncertain light was a shadowy outline of a porter with luggage at the further side of the "quad," and two men entering a door in the same direction. From two windows the ruddy glow of fire-light came forth, and another blind was radiant with lamp or candlelight; but beyond this there was nothing but thick clouds and splashing and dripping. At length Louis saw a man hastily cross the quad in his direction, with a lantern in his hand, and he ventured to open his door and steal out timidly on the landing. Nothing was to be heard, and nothing was to be seen. He descended, still very cautiously, and, much afraid of going somewhere where he ought not, at length reached the ground-floor, and commenced a search for his cousin's rooms, which he knew were somewhere there: and there they were sure enough, with the outer door fast. Louis knocked; no answer: a second time, but all was silent; but just when he was about to

venture into the quadrangle to find the retreat of the gate porter, to his great relief a middle-aged man, with a lantern, entered rapidly and approached him.

"Beg pardon, sir; mistaken your rooms?" He turned his lantern curiously on Louis.

"I want Mr. Digby," said our hero.

"He's not come in yet, sir."

"I thought every one was obliged to come in to-day," said Louis, feeling very much as if he had been caught doing a wrong thing.

"Yes, sir; but most of the gentlemen doesn't knock in till late."

"Are you the scout?" asked Louis. "The porter at the gate told me he would send you. I want some coals and some candles in my room. And there's no poker."

"Plenty of coals, sir," said the man, as he followed Louis. "Mr. Mortimer?" he added, inquiringly, as Louis approached the open door.

Louis replied in the affirmative; and the man entering, presently produced a couple of candlesticks from a small room or closet, about half the size of Louis's bed-room, which he had not observed; next he brought out a poker, and stirred the fire.

"'Fraid you've been very uncomfortable, sir. Have you any candles, sir? There was none ordered."

"No; really," said Louis, "I don't know any thing about them. Cannot you get me one for to-night?"

"I'll see if I can borrow one or two, sir."

He went away, and returned in a few minutes with a couple of candles, and placing them in the sticks, lighted one, and then busied himself in laying a few sticks on the fire; when, to Louis's surprise, he lifted the window-seat on which

he had been sitting and abstracted thence two or three shovelfuls of coal.

"That's where the coals is, sir; all handy, sir; and when you want any thing, sir, if you summon me, I'll make all straight."

"Thank you," said Louis smiling; "I shall be wiser next time: but how am I to summon you? I see no bell here."

"The gentlemen calls out of the doors and windows, sir; they ain't no ways particular about bells."

"And what is your name?" asked Louis.

"Harry, sir."

Louis looked puzzled, and the scout finished by asking if he could get him any thing.

"I should like some tea by and by," said Louis. "Can you get me some boiling water, or must I make it myself?"

This question was presently answered by the appearance of a battered copper tea-kettle from the closet before mentioned, which was already filled with water; then Louis asked his assistance in undoing his store-box, mentally thanking the provident old housekeeper for her provision of groceries. The scout hinted the necessity of providing some sheets for the bedmaker, as he turned over the box indicated.

"But these are not my boxes," exclaimed Louis. "What am I to do? I shall have no tea and no bed apparently to-night."

The scout and his new master stood looking at one another, and Louis afterwards wondered that the former could keep his countenance so immovably.

"Well, sir," he said, at length, "we must get these to their right owners. 'Mr. Moreton,'—that's No. 3, corner staircase,—not my staircase,—right-hand side. Is your boxes got a full direction on 'em, sir?"

This question was presently answered by the appearance of a battered copper teakettle.—p. 160.

Louis replied in the affirmative, and the scout remarked,—

"Then they'll reach all safe enough, I dare say."

"But can you get me any tea?" said Louis, anxiously; "can any one see after my luggage?"

"You left it where, sir?"

"At the 'Mitre.'"

The scout reassured him, and then vanished to procure some tea for our poor bewildered hero.

During his absence, Louis dolefully watched the ascending flames of his very young-looking fire, and mentally wondered when he might calculate on the kettle boiling. Before he had solved this problem, his messenger returned, bringing with him a pleasant-looking young man, whose frank and cordial manner prepossessed him directly.

"I hear you are in distress," he said. "My name is Nevinson; I keep near you. This is a very uncomfortable beginning," he said, smiling; "will you come and take a bachelor's tea with me? I can offer it hot, with a good fire, too."

"You are very kind," said Louis, warmly shaking the proffered hand; "I shall be very glad indeed to accept your kind offer, for I am most unfortunately situated. I have brought another man's luggage by mistake, and am afraid I am doomed either to the floor or sofa, or a sheetless and pillow-caseless bed to-night."

"Harry has been to me twice to-night on your behalf," said his new friend, "and has told me all your troubles. If your luggage does not arrive soon, I shall be very happy to lend you some sheets. Harry will fetch them."

"I am really in too great a state of distress to refuse your kind offer," replied Louis; "I am very much obliged to you."

"Well, come along to my rooms; yours offer but a deso-

late welcome to a freshman. We will leave the field fair to Harry and the bedmaker; and I dare say all will be comfortable enough when you return."

Louis followed his new friend across the landing to an open door, whence the reflection of a ruddy fire glowed, and presently found himself in a most enticing-looking snuggery. This room was panelled like his own; but a blazing fire shone upon red carpet, red curtains, red tablecloth, and plain substantial furniture. An argand lamp burned on a table in front of the fire, on which was placed a small tea-tray, resplendent with gilding, and a solitary cup and saucer, black tea-pot, cream-jug, and sugar-basin. Beyond the tray were bread and butter, and a preserve-pot of capacious dimensions. On a little table, on one side of the fire, were two or three books, and in front of the fire a large red-morocco library-chair, which it was easy to imagine the owner had just vacated. A kettle, too large for the fireplace, was tenderly balanced on the edges of the hobs, and was now sending forth huge columns of steam, very suggestive of a nice cup of tea. To finish the picture, a well-stocked set of book-shelves on one side, a chess-board and box of men and a flute on a small console-table, and one or two framed engravings hanging against the walls, attracted Louis's eyes, and instantly assured him of the quiet tastes of his new acquaintance.

Mr. Nevinson wheeled the large chair to the snuggest side of the fire, and invited Louis to seat himself; and on Louis demurring about occupying it, he merrily produced a smaller one from a dark corner of the room.

"I always keep one for my friends and myself too. Now turn yours round to the front; you are cold, and I am done to a turn. It is rather an uncomfortable evening."

"*Rather!*" echoed Louis; "a very miserable evening, I

think. You are very moderate in your terms; I suppose because your room is so snug."

"Or, rather," replied Nevinson, quietly, "because I have an antipathy to railing at the weather."

Louis colored; but the reply was like music to his ears.

"So have I too," he answered, "and I stand rebuked for my forgetfulness."

Nevinson looked up at him with a peculiarly bright smile, and filling a cup full of tea, tossed it into the pot, then seizing the steaming kettle, filled it.

"You shall have a cup directly. We are our own tea-makers here, and very good tea-makers we become in a marvellously short time; we beat all the mothers and sisters hollow. I won't say much for economy, though; you will find a very liberal spirit characteristic of Oxonians. We are many of us not content only with giving our *little all*, but what we want we 'borrow, borrow, borrow!' However, rest content that this is an honest cup of tea, as I hope all you get here will be," he added, as he replaced the kettle on the hearth. "My kettle is on too magnificent a scale for my grate; I assure you it requires a conjurer's skill to stick it on the fire; only Harry and I can perfectly succeed. One man sticks it down on one side, and the water runs out of the lid, then he attempts to remedy it by damaging the other half of the fire; and another will arrange so that it shall tumble over on your feet, if you have the hardihood to sit near the fire when it boils. I bought it a year and a half ago, when I did not fully understand my means of accommodation; it has served my turn, and I don't like discarding an old friend. Where's Harry, I wonder?"

Hardly had he uttered the words, when the scout appeared with some cold meat, which he placed on the table, and then

fetched another cup and saucer, plate, knife and fork, from some mysterious recess, and again vanished.

"You are hungry, I dare say, Mortimer."

"No, thank you; I made a very fair dinner just before my arrival."

Nevinson then produced a toasting-fork and set about making some toast, when, his preparations being completed, much to Louis's amusement, he drew the large table nearer to the fire, and invited Louis to partake of the repast. Certainly our hero thought he had never seen so black a cup of tea as that now handed to him.

"Sugar? cream?" inquired Nevinson, as he produced from the tray the several receptacles for these articles.

Louis thanked him, paused, and took some cream.

"No sugar?"

"Yes, thank you;" replied Louis, almost afraid to ask for something that might not be there. He said nothing, but took his teaspoon and helped himself very carefully to the saccharine luxury. The pains he took in chasing the lumps from side to side before he safely attained his object attracted his host's attention.

"I see now what you want. How soon we forget our old experience!" he said, as he helped himself with his finger and thumb. "We use no other tongs here than those with which nature has furnished us. I had a pair, but I don't well know what has become of them. Pray do not give yourself the trouble of fishing for your sugar another time in that painful manner."

"I might have remembered too, how very ill-mannered I thought my brother in that respect," said Louis, "when he returned home after his first term."

"Had you a brother here?"

"I have a brother now at Cambridge," replied Louis.

"Have you any friends in Oxford?"

"A few, I believe," replied Louis: "two in this college."

"And who may they be?"

"My cousin Mr. Digby, and Mr. Hamilton."

"Oh, indeed; Digby is your cousin, is he?" said Nevinson. "What Hamilton are you speaking of? There are two of that name,—William Hamilton and Edward, who has graduated, and lives out of college now. He is studying the law."

"My friend's name is Edward," said Louis, eagerly; "and I know he has taken his degree. He is a very dear friend of mine. Do you know him?"

"Very little; just to speak to," replied Nevinson; "but I have really almost coveted his friendship, though I am generally very independent in such matters. He is a friend worth having, Mortimer. Of course, you know he took a double first, and his perseverance and industry have only been equalled by the exemplary manner in which he has passed through this ordeal. It is one," he added, looking at Louis; "and much, I am sure, depends on our first acquaintances and actions. We cannot be too careful about our friends at Oxford; I am glad you have so valuable a one."

"Thank you," said Louis, gratefully.

A little more was said about Hamilton, and passed from him to examinations, chapels, lectures, and other college topics, on which Louis was naturally anxious to gain as much information as possible in the time. The tea was at length concluded, and the scout being summoned, cleared the table, and, at the same time, informed Louis that his missing luggage had arrived, again hinting at the want of sheets. Louis rose, and afraid of intruding any longer on the hospitality of his kind entertainer, wished him good evening; but

Nevinson would not hear of his leaving him, and remonstrating on the loneliness of the project, made him promise to return when the bedmaker's wants were supplied.

Louis was not long absent, deferring his general unpacking for a later period, and was once more installed in his comfortable seat, while his new friend went across the room for some coals. While he was on this errand, Louis took up one of the books that lay on the smaller table near him. It was a treatise on chess; and not having much sympathy with that game, laid it down again. The next proved to be a pocket edition of Sophocles, which bore evidences of much study. This was also laid down, and Louis took a third, which proved to be a neat pocket Bible, full in every direction with little scraps of paper, scribbled all over. A Concordance lay underneath it. Louis closed the sacred volume very reverentially without any further scrutiny, but a thrill of warm satisfaction came over him as he saw it so evidently studied. Nevinson saw his interest in the volumes, and as he finished making up the fire and sat down again, he said,—

"You don't find much to interest you there. Are you a chess-player?"

"No, not at all," said Louis; "I scarcely know the moves."

"I am very fond of it; it is a noble game," replied his companion: "and we all want recreation sometimes. You are fond of books though, I fancy," he said.

"Very," replied Louis.

"Well, I think that is the best of all tastes," rejoined his new friend.

A silence ensued, when Louis said with great feeling, but rather timidly,—

"I am very glad to see one Book here. I am sure we

shall be true friends; at least, if you will allow me to be your friend."

A little color mounted into Nevinson's pale face. He looked steadily into the fire, and for a few seconds Louis thought he was offended; but, hardly had the thought passed his mind, when Nevinson held out his hand with a sweet, frank smile.

"I must warn you, though," he said, "that you must not judge that all will think as you and I, upon whose table you see a Bible; nay, not even if it be full of notes. They may only be 'divinity crams.' You know a certain portion of the Bible forms a part of our examination."

"Yes, but you had prepared me before," said Louis; "and here, where I expected to meet none who loved the things I am sure we both value, it is doubly pleasant to find my first acquaintance a true friend." Both were silent for a few minutes, when a trampling up the stairs and some loud talking attracted Louis's notice.

"What's that?"

"Some of the men coming to their rooms, that's all," answered Nevinson. "You will hear this at intervals, with a little extra noise in the quad till nearly twelve o'clock; therefore you must not be alarmed if you are woke out of your first sleep by a view hallo, or 'forward, there, after him!' or a noisy scrap of a song, for the late ones will be very uproarious."

The footsteps had died away somewhere overhead, when the scout re-entered to ask the friends if he could do any thing more for either. Nevinson replied in the negative, and turned to Louis, inquiring if there was any thing he wanted further.

"I thank you," he said, hesitatingly; "I think not; you

have shown me where to find every thing now. Stay, shall I not want a gown to-morrow? I quite forgot that. How can I get it now?"

"Oh, I dare say Harry can supply that want," said Nevinson. "Harry, you will have a cap and gown ready for Mr. Mortimer, to-morrow." Harry signified his assent and comprehension of the necessity, and disappeared.

Another hour was spent very cheerfully, and the more Louis saw of his new friend, the more he liked him. There was a boyish frankness and sweetness, mingled with so much true nobility of character, that fascinated while he hardly defined the wherefore, and an enthusiasm which delighted Louis, the more that it was tempered with so much anxiety to fulfil his duty. At half-past nine our hero took his leave, and his friend would accompany him to his rooms, to see that all was right. Louis found a bright fire, with candles on the table ready to light. His first care after lighting his candles was to undo his grocery-box, in order to procure some tea for breakfast. The cord had been already removed; but as it was a kind of deal packing-case, carefully nailed down, his inexperienced hands hardly knew how to open it. Nevinson, however, here came to his relief, and forcing it open with the poker, after another inquiry if he could be of any further service, and inviting him to breakfast with him the next morning, wished him good-night, and left him to his meditations. The first thing Louis thought of when alone was to fasten his outer door, and then closing the inner, he drew his chair to the fire and opened his Bible.

Christian reader! when, after a day of excitement, of change of scene, and of disturbance of thought, when perhaps this holy book has been so packed away that you have not been able to reach it, does it not seem very sweet to look

upon it again? How many sweet thoughts are recalled by the sight—how holy is that still hour when you can commune with its precious contents, and feel that wherever you are, those promises are yours, and that, though

"All things change, He changes not!"

Louis lay down that night in peace, and thankfully remembered the unexpected happiness of finding a kindred spirit; and college now seemed to wear a brighter aspect. He thought if Nevinson could walk so blamelessly through its temptations, he might also.

Every one who knows the effect of so new a scene on so excitable an imagination as that of our hero, will not wonder that he lay awake some time after he retired to bed, dwelling over and over again on the events of the day; but the calm which the Word of God had given, seemed shed over all, and at length he sank into a sweet slumber. How long he had slept he knew not, when an extraordinary noise roused him in some alarm, and it was a few minutes before his senses reminded him of the caution he had received, and he distinguished the hasty trampling of feet, and the noisy exclamations of some late revellers, who had "knocked in" at the latest possible minute.

He listened with the curiosity natural to his position, but could hear nothing distinctly. The noise dispersed gradually in various directions, a portion coming up his staircase, and at last concentrating, as far as he was concerned, in a heavy trampling, and subsequent laughing and singing in the next room to his. This was all well enough for a few minutes, but Louis naturally began to wish for a cessation of it, when it had lasted half an hour. But in vain he buried his head in the pillow, and turned from side to side in feverish attempts

to renew his slumbers; the noise continued with very little diminution till two o'clock, and then for another half-hour the occupants of the apartment appeared to be incessantly walking about, at the end of which time, fairly worn out, our hero fell asleep, and slept till he was roused a second time by a tremendous noise at the head of his bed, as if the wall outside were falling. He started up and listened. Daylight was peeping through his window; a little more rumbling and the noise ceased. There was nothing more, and he ventured to lie down again, after ascertaining that it was six o'clock. However, it was now too late for more sleep, and he presently began to rise. When his toilet was partially completed, he heard the scout in his sitting-room commencing operations for his comfort, and had just put the last touch to his dress, when a loud "Sir-r," with the final *r* prolonged to an indefinite period, brought him to the door of his room.

"Quarter-past seven, sir. Chapel at eight, sir. Gown and cap. Breakfast in your room, sir?"

"No, thank you," replied Louis. "What am I to pay you for this gown?"

"Oh, sir! gentlemen always pays at the end of term, sir," replied the scout.

Louis said nothing more, and was presently left alone. He was not sorry he had so much time before him, for he could occupy it well till the chapel bell began to ring, when arraying himself directly in the gown provided for him, and with more hesitation placing the shabby cap on his head, he sallied forth and reached the chapel door exactly with another man from the opposite side of the quad.

They entered together, and Louis hesitatingly turned to the stranger,—

"Can you tell me where I can sit? I am very fresh."

"You are one of the very few, I fancy, that like to acknowledge their verdure," replied the stranger, smiling. And leading the way into the body of the chapel, Louis presently found himself in a convenient seat, and after asking a blessing on the morning service, he opened his Bible, which he had brought in with him, and finding out the lessons, endeavored to fix his mind on them. In about ten minutes the men began to pour in; then came the dons, and the bell ceasing, a young man in gown and cap rushed to the door and closed it, just as an undergraduate pushed in, in whom Louis recognized Frank Digby.

Louis was not among those who deemed chapel a "bore." He would gladly have lingered behind the rush in the chapel, when the prayers were over. Hardly had he stepped on the threshold when his cousin arrested him with—

"So, Louis, you did come last night to nestle under the wings of *alma mater*, till she considers you ready to take a stall in the wide market of the world. I understand you have been in a quandary, and took refuge with a saint at last. You must come and breakfast with me this morning."

"I thank you, I am engaged."

"Eh? You've not lost any time; to-morrow, then."

"I shall be very happy," answered Louis.

Just at this moment a servant approached Louis with a message from Mr. L., inviting him to breakfast with him.

"What am I to do?" he said, turning to Frank. "I am engaged to Nevinson."

"Under the circumstances, he must excuse you," said Frank.

Louis hastily returned a proper message by Mr. L.'s servant, and then ran to Nevinson's rooms to excuse himself. He then repaired to the tutor's rooms by his direction, and had just reached them when a heavy hand was laid on his

shoulder, and turning round, to his inexpressible delight Hamilton's face greeted him.

"Well, Mr. Mortimer, so you have no eyes for an old friend, now you are a man."

"My dear Hamilton," exclaimed Louis, joyfully; "indeed I have looked everywhere for you all yesterday. I was expecting to meet you somewhere, and could not amid the sea of strange faces."

"For a good reason," said Hamilton, with a quiet smile; "because I arrived in the night. Louis, you are sadly undignified; I am afraid you have a considerable remnant yet of boyhood about you. These are raptures quite beyond the dignity of an Oxonian, I assure you."

"I do not care," replied Louis, laughing. "I hope I shall never be ashamed to acknowledge that I am glad to see you. I shall be ashamed of myself then."

"Well, whither are you bound? This is not the way to your rooms, I presume."

Louis informed his friend of his destination, and found to his great satisfaction that Hamilton was to be of the tutor's party. Accordingly, the two friends made their entrance together. There were three or four besides, to whom Louis was introduced, and much pleasant conversation ensued. Louis was pleased to see the evident estimation in which his beloved friend was held, and listened with much pride to his sensible and intelligent remarks. Hamilton being now no longer an undergraduate, having taken his B. A., was located in lodgings in the city; as he was studying for the bar, he was not likely to leave college for a year or two,—much of course to Louis's satisfaction. The other young men present were all of more than a year's standing, and were reputed to be of the steadiest reading men in the college. There were

no lectures that morning, and Hamilton suggested, when he and Louis had left the tutor's, the propriety of a walk, and making some acquaintance with the environs of Oxford. It was no little advantage to our hero to have so substantial a friend, especially as Hamilton was as determined to exercise a surveillance over Louis here as he had been at Ashfield House. Their conversation for some time during their walk turned upon manners and customs at Oxford; but as they emerged from the immediate precincts of the city, it insensibly fell on their old school-fellows, many of whom were in residence there, or had just left; and Hamilton had many things to relate of them, which were very interesting to Louis.

"You will be surprised," he said, "to see what a nice fellow Trevannion has grown. Gentlemanly he always was, but he is really fascinating now. Old Wykeham says, 'Manners maketh the man;' if so, Trevannion's a splendid specimen of a man. If college would do so much for us all, Louis, we should have reason to think much of it; I am sure, however, it has done little for me in that respect. I am as uncivil and as unceremonious as ever, and care even less than ever for other's opinions; and that, I believe, is what we all learn, more or less, as we grow older and see more of the world. We understand the worth of any man's praise."

"Perhaps so," said Louis. "I suppose I am hardly old enough to have arrived at that happy comprehension: I am afraid I am very susceptible yet; and you—you have worked as hard as if you cared."

"That's an old notion of duty, Louis; and yet, perhaps, we know little of ourselves when we say we are indifferent to other's opinions. We are very dependent on one another. You have not heard of Clifton's success, perhaps?"

"Yes, I heard of it in the summer; Mr. Royston told me."

"Do you know that Ferrers was one of the candidates, and besides being his senior, he is a two-year man."

"Do you know Ferrers now, Hamilton?" asked Louis.

"Well, upon my word, I don't, Louis; I never felt inclined to renew the acquaintance. He never was a friend of mine, and his cool behavior of old to you quite disgusted me. He is very steady, I believe; at least I hear nothing to the contrary; but there is something about him that always repels me."

"I am sorry for that," replied Louis, "because you would do him so much good."

Hamilton made no reply, and presently changed the subject.

"So Frank Digby's migrated. Some people prophesied truly."

"Unhappily," replied Louis. "I hope all will go on well here: he was very quiet and serious at church. I think Frank has many right feelings, Hamilton."

"Indeed he has, Louis. It is a misfortune for him that he is so popular: some men cannot understand the true worth of such popularity. I suppose you know that Trevannion is now a fellow of——, and is to be ordained in a few months?"

"No, I did not," answered Louis; "he must have worked hard, then. Did you think him clever?"

Hamilton smiled significantly, and remarked in a dry tone,—

"I always thought him of a good family. All fellowships don't go by order of merit. Remember, you are engaged to my lodgings this evening, Louis. I shall have Jones, and

Trevannion if I can get him, to met you and poor Frank. I must look after him a little, if it were only for poor Vernon's memory."

This was said as Hamilton bid Louis good-by at the college gates; and Louis was just entering them, when his father's voice most unexpectedly greeted him. Mr. Mortimer had hurried to Oxford as soon as he was able, in order to save him as much embarrassment as possible, and to see that his arrangements were properly conducted. Of course, all previous engagements were now suspended, and before night every desire Louis had respecting his comforts was amply supplied, even to the new carpet and piano.

We presume our readers are by this time wearied of detail, and will gladly allow us to premise that our hero's initiation to the regular routine of his new duties duly took place, that the lecture-room was familiar to him, and that he understood how unnecessary it was deemed for him to sit in chapel a quarter of an hour before service began; that wine and breakfast "coaches" were no longer so many mysteries, and that all his friends had properly paid their respective calls. Hamilton was installed private tutor to him, and Trevannion, now arrived at the bloom of grace and manhood, had been very gracious to his old schoolfellow at Hamilton's rooms. Nevinson's remark on the necessity of choosing first acquaintances cautiously, Louis found most true; for, in spite of Hamilton's constant cautions, he had more idle acquaintances in a fortnight, through Frank, than he knew how to manage; and the round of excitement into which he was almost inadvertently drawn, before long thoroughly wearied him, and he longed to return home. He went very constantly to Hamilton at the appointed times, and readily joined a little party at Nevinson's who met once a week for reading the Scrip-

tures together. This was his great safeguard; for in time the giddy and worldly grew weary of his society, and left him to his own chosen associates, with little exception.

CHAPTER XV.

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

"The Sabbath is God's gracious present to a working world; and for wearied minds and bodies it is the grand restorative. The Sabbath does not arrive like sleep: it does not entrance us whether we will or not, but addressing us as intelligent beings, our Creator assures us we need it, and bids us notice its return, and court its renovation."—*Hamilton's Oasis.*

The Sabbath was made for man: for man to use, but not for man to abuse. But, alas! how sadly is the Sabbath slighted! how often is it, according to the taste and habits of the individual, made either a day of idleness or secular industry, of worldly care or worldly pleasure, regardless of that rich promise made to those who call it "a delight, holy of the Lord," that they shall "delight themselves in Him!"

This sacred day Louis found was that most commonly chosen for "breakfasts" and "wines;" not that the parties might meet to speak together of the things belonging to the Sabbath, but that they might the more uninterruptedly, from the greater leisure, seek their "own pleasure;" thus reversing the order of things, and becoming more frivolous and idle on this blessed day than on that of any of the six allowed to man for his own. Well might the prophet plead with such, "Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed me: and ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? But bring now the sacri-

fices of righteousness to the storehouse of God's love, and prove Him therewith, and see if He will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Louis had once been betrayed, through ignorance, into joining one of these Sunday parties; but so disturbed was he at the manner in which the day had been desecrated, that he firmly resolved nothing should again induce him to break in upon the sanctity of the time he had been from his childhood taught to hallow.

For two or three weeks he had avoided the necessity of declining invitations by engaging himself previously to Nevinson or Hamilton; but at length a Sunday arrived when some of Hamilton's relations were with him, and Louis did not feel himself sufficiently intimate with Nevinson to invite himself two following Sundays, especially as he had spent the Saturday evening with him. He had risen early; and as there was some time before chapel, after he was dressed he sat down to his piano, and quietly played some favorite hymn-tunes and chants; at first rather timidly,—for he had not yet quite overcome a certain fear of being overheard,—but at length ventured very softly to sing the words of one or two hymns, gradually forgetting any thing but his own pleasure in the coming of the sacred day.

When the bell began to ring, he closed his piano, and, breathing a mental prayer for power to remember the Sabbath day, went into the chapel, for the pleasure of remaining there quietly alone before the general rush; and when service was over, he lingered behind, hoping that the quadrangle would be nearly clear before he left the chapel. But, to his chagrin, he found Frank and a few of his intimates waiting for him at the door.

"You will come with me, Mr. Louis, this morning," he said: "I really believe you have kept purposely out of my way. Where were you last night?"

Before Louis could reply, his old acquaintance Ford, who "kept" the rooms next door to him, said,—

"Digby! do you know aught of the heavenly sounds that saluted my ears this morning?—a faint, fairy-like murmur, gradually swelling into enthusiasm. Were you practising the *ars divina?* or was St. Cecilia doing honor to the day *in propriâ personâ?*"

"I!" said Frank; "I must have sung in my dreams, if I sang before chapel."

"Ay, perhaps I heard it in mine," rejoined the other,—"such 'divine airs,'—such 'pious orgies!'"

Louis colored, but made no remark, and by this time they had reached Frank's rooms. Frank had at the first onset seized Louis's arm, and now forcibly pushed him into the room, where breakfast was laid with all the inviting paraphernalia incidental to such repasts. Louis stopped at the door—

"No, thank you, Frank; not this morning. Good-by for the present."

"Nay, not so fast," said Frank; "why not this morning?"

Louis would have evaded an answer, but his passage was obstructed by one or two of his cousin's party, who were standing in the door-way; and, with a little hesitation, he replied,—

"I do not like visiting on Sunday."

Frank released his hold with a vexed look.

"I thought you had got rid of these sanctimonious fancies, Louis," he said.

"I hope not," answered Louis, more firmly this time, "but rather that they will be greater."

"A saint! a saint!" exclaimed one of the party, as he flung his cap behind the sofa, and pushed past Louis,—"St. Cecilia herself!"

Ford lifted his cap with mock reverence, as he made way for Louis to pass.

Sancta Cecilia! ora pro nobis!"

Frank made no further effort to detain Louis, who went immediately to his room.

"I did not know the saints had got hold of your cousin, Digby," said one of Frank's party, as he seated himself at the table; "it is a thousand pities; he is too good a fellow to be spoiled."

"He is a good fellow," said Frank, "but always at school too precise in some things; he would kill his hen if she laid an egg on Sunday."

A laugh followed; but Frank turned the subject; and whether Louis's firmness had had any influence we know not, but he insensibly checked some amount of frivolity that morning by his own unusually sedate deportment.

Louis enjoyed his own quiet breakfast exceedingly, and spent his time afterwards, till the time for attending church, in reading his Bible with a commentary, and committing a chapter to memory, according to custom.

At church he met Ferrers, and invited him to lunch with him. There had been hitherto a considerable amount of backwardness in Ferrers to meet Louis's advances half-way; he pleaded now, that "he never went anywhere; he had not a moment to spare."

"You made that excuse the last time I asked you," said Louis; "I can generally very well believe it; but to-day

you cannot be very busy; and though it is Sunday, there is no reason why we should not quietly meet; we may be able to do one another some good. I do not like Sunday visiting generally, but I hope we should not spend an hour or two amiss together."

"You will do me good, I dare say," said Ferrers, coloring; "but," added he, hesitatingly, "I am nearly as busy on Sunday as on other days."

"How?" asked Louis. "I think we ought to be busy on Sunday in one way. It is not meant to be an idle day, but we should not be industrious in our own business; and you are not, are you?"

"I am afraid I am," answered Ferrers.

"You must come," persisted Louis.

Ferrers said no more, and Louis led the way, and they were soon quietly seated at lunch in Louis's rooms.

After a few remarks, Louis turned the conversation on the sermon they had heard that morning; and from thence he passed on to several texts in connection, and remembered one or two little anecdotes in confirmation of what he supported, referring to Ferrers continually for his opinion. Ferrers said as little as he conveniently could, and now and then the conversation flagged very much, for, earnest as Louis was, he found it difficult to keep it up alone. At last, he proposed that they should read a chapter; and his companion assenting, and leaving to him the choice of a chapter, they turned to the fire, and read the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. Louis made a few simple remarks on some passages therein, waiting at intervals, to leave Ferrers room to suggest something. The latter, however, remained quite silent, and sat uneasily, playing with the corners of the Bible that he held in his hand.

Louis looked curiously and sorrowfully at him, and after another pause, he said, "The last verses are very striking to me; perhaps I have been always taught to consider them so. 'If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord!' Oh! Ferrers, it is comparatively easy not to seek our own pleasure and our own ways, but not to speak our own words, how difficult! My conscience always reproaches me at the end of the day, even when I have been most careful. The great thing is not to think our own thoughts, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Is it not a sweet promise, 'Then thou shalt delight thyself in the Lord!' 'Blessed is the people that can rejoice in Thee!' With all the hindrances around, and our tendency to delight ourselves in other things, it is not a little thing to name such a promise. We cannot delight in holy things unless God teaches us. It seems a parallel passage to this: 'If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine.' Do not you think so?"

Ferrers assented reluctantly, and Louis continued

"I often think that one reason why our land is so great and so happy, is because the observance of the Sabbath here is so different from that of the continental countries. I am sure a great blessing rests on the remembrance of the Sabbath both in countries and on individuals. I should like to have written up in every house, 'Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy.' One of the greatest charges, you will remember, against the Jews was, that they neglected this commandment. The Sabbath was given for a sign between God

and man, and I do believe by this sign His people will be truly known."

"But don't you make a Jewish Sabbath of it?" said Ferrers, raising his eyes.

"I think not," answered Louis. "The Jews' was a strict outward observance, but the Christians' is more, though not so strict in that which makes it a bondage. We do not forget that the Sabbath was made for man, but yet not for man to abuse; for man to pause in his worldly business; for man to commune with his Maker, to meditate on His Word, to partake of the bread of life, and to deal it to those who are perishing. The blessing of this precious day can only be known in Eternity."

Ferrers did not show any sympathy with his friend's earnestness, and Louis felt there was none. He did not like to ask him how his own Sundays were spent, but he could very well form an estimate, from the manner in which some of his studious acquaintances passed their time; some of the more sérious deluding themselves with the idea that getting up the Greek Testament, reading Butler's Analogy and Sermons, and Paley's Evidences, and searching for the authorities cited, was a very laudable and proper manner of passing the day.

"I cannot see it quite as you do," said Ferrers: "'We are not under the law, but under grace.'"

"'Shall we then sin, that grace may abound?'" eagerly interrupted Louis. "That very reason, Ferrers; that very reason will make a grateful heart more fearful of offending the tender Giver of all grace. It is quite impossible that a true child of God can wilfully disregard the Sabbath. It will be to him a 'delight,' 'the holy of the Lord,' 'honorable,' though, alas! he is too often sore let and hindered by his evil nature."

"Still, you regard it as a command that will be rewarded or punished," said Ferrers. "And did not our Saviour bring in a new dispensation?"

"'He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it,'" replied Louis. "He abrogated the law as a means of salvation, because man could not save himself by keeping it. So He kept it Himself, and bore man's punishment for the broken law, that whoever believed in the finished work done for Him may be saved; and *then* when this faith comes, he will follow the steps of his blessed Master, and endeavor to keep the law as strictly as his imperfect nature allows him; as devoutly and fearfully as if his salvation depended on it; and I say, Ferrers, he is not a child of God without that earnest endeavor to keep His commandments."

"*Fearfully?*" repeated Ferrers. "Is not that against your own creed? 'He that feareth is not made perfect in love,' Mortimer."

"Ah, that is the spirit of bondage which they have who vainly think heaven is to be won by good works: the spirit of the truth-seeker who has not yet received the spirit of adoption, whereby we call God our Father, and lean upon Him as a little obedient child, who would not willingly neglect any command but through the weakness and forgetfulness attendant on childhood, often falls short; yet the father loves him, and the child has no dread of his parent. But what I mean by *fearfully* endeavoring to keep God's commands is, that having received this grace, feeling and knowing truly the stupendous gifts bestowed, we are fearful of bringing reproach on Him; we are fearful lest His face should be turned away, even for a time; we are anxious to show that the grace of God has not been given us in vain. It is not because we can save ourselves, that we are to work out our salvation with fear and

trembling, but because the great and mighty God so graciously works in us to will and to do, of His good pleasure."

"I really cannot exactly understand how you mix up faith and works in the manner you do," said Ferrers, abruptly.

"It seems to me as clear as noon-day," rejoined Louis quietly. "We are saved by faith, which is the gift of God; and this faith must inevitably work by love. Works have not the smallest share in our salvation, and yet we are not Christians without them. The tree is known by its fruits—the Christian is known by his works."

"And yet you talk of rewards and promises."

"And so I do. There are many rewards and many promises for duties commanded, but not salvation. In the text we have just read is one reward. To me it is a great one, and so it will be to every one who sincerely desires to rejoice in the Lord. My dear Ferrers, you were speaking just now of the abrogation of the law by the Lord's death: so far from making it void, He goes deeper than Moses. A sinful thought in the Gospel is the transgression of the law, and surely, difficult as we are in persuasion of our utter sinfulness, we must all plead guilty to many sins of thought. Our Lord says, 'Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.' But I know God must teach us all these things, they will all seem clear then; but do try to remember the Sabbath, Ferrers, and see how much more God will teach you. I am sure nothing is gained even in worldly concerns by breaking the Sabbath; and think what you owe to Him for the position you so much desired. Is it not ungrateful to slight any known command?"

Ferrers made no reply, and Louis, overcome by his own

feelings, remained silent for some time, till his eyes fell on his open watch, which lay on the table, and seeing it was nearer the time of afternoon service at the church than he thought, he rose, threw on his out-door accoutrements, and sallied forth with his friend to St. Mary's.

Louis was claimed after Hall by his friend Hamilton, and the evening was spent quietly and soberly in his friend's lodgings.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Chide him for faults, and do it reverently,
When you perceive his blood inclined to mirth."
Henry IV., Second Part.

Time rolled on: the long wished-for vacation arrived and passed; and another, and another. Hamilton, though inflexible at Christmas, yielded at last to Louis's persuasions, and passed part of the "long" at Dashwood Priory, where he made himself a universal favorite, and won golden opinions from Mrs. Colthrop, who many times expressed her satisfaction that "Master Louis had so solid a young gentleman to tutor him."

Louis's difficulties respecting the demonstration of his principles were now over. He belonged to the studious, upon whose sacred time the riotous dared not intrude; of the latter, indeed, he saw but little, except now and then at his cousin's rooms; but Frank's set, though idle, were not of the worst, and his own conduct was generally steady, as respects college rules. He never missed chapel, or lectures; rarely

had late parties at his rooms, and had on no occasion been out beyond hours.

Frank's love for the ludicrous had by no means forsaken him, though for some time he seemed to have sufficient sense to take warning by the situation in which it had already placed him, and confined its exhibition to his private friends, and to drawing exact caricatures of the dons, with whom, nevertheless, he was a general favorite. We have already introduced our readers to one of the Fellows, by name Mr. Royston, the mathematical tutor. Mr. Royston was a very inviting subject for Frank's powers of imitation; and, were the truth told, this good-natured and excellent, though eccentric man, was often *quizzed* by his facetious pupil. But though fully cognizant of the fact, Mr. Royston—who had, be it known, a keen sense of dry humor—never heard his own voice when Frank spoke in it, nor ever saw the multiplied sketches of his profile which adorned the scraps of paper occasionally left in the lecture-room, though his small twinkling eyes had often watched, with intense amusement, the seven scratches that traced it on the handiest surface near,—the operation being sometimes performed with the seal end of a pencil-case on the green tablecloth, with an exactitude that greatly charmed his fellow-students; nor, to the slight discomfiture of the artist, did he take the faintest notice of his full-length portrait traced with a finger on the damp wall one morning, exactly in the light which met his eyes where he sat.

How it was, we do not mean to guess; but Frank seemed to have carried the old man's heart by storm. He watched over him with a paternal care, often inviting him to his rooms, stimulating his studies; and when Frank changed his apartments, interested himself to get him a desirable set, in

immediate contiguity to his own; for which last favor Frank was very ungrateful, as he was obliged to be so quiet. However, when there was a little extra noise, Mr. Royston always seemed deaf, and generally invited Frank to breakfast the next morning, to hear the history of the previous evening's exploit. Frank, to do him justice, was not wholly insensible to the kindness of the "old boy," as he irreverently designated him, and was always ready to perform any little service for him that did not interfere too conspicuously with any of his own pursuits.

We have already said that Mr. Royston was eccentric, and one of his eccentricities annoyed Frank and some of his fellow-students. He would persist in wearing a very old coat, something between a great-coat and a surtout, which had once been handsome, and for which he still possessed an immense affection, because it had been expensive, and was very convenient as a kettle-holder and pen-wiper; and not confining the exhibition of the worn-out habiliment to his own domicil, he further exasperated his pupils by occasionally taking a turn in the cloisters on a wet day. Many of the offended had at different times vowed vengeance on this coat; but none had yet discovered a way of carrying the threat into execution, when the bright wits of Frank Digby, Esq., hit upon a plan, which he was not long in communicating to those among his friends who were occasionally favored with invitations to Mr. Royston's rooms. Frank had discovered that the doomed coat, when not in use, always hung behind a green curtain, in a recess in the outer room; and, bent upon his scheme, it was not long before he and his accomplices found means for its prosecution. Their operations consisted, on every available opportunity, of carefully cutting two threads from the skirt all the way round, which in conse-

quence insensibly diminished in length in the course of time. Opportunities being often few and far between, three terms and one long vacation passed before the habit began to shrink to any sensible degree; and the first full intimation the owner had of the scarcity of his tails, was on an occasion public enough and ludicrous enough to satisfy the revenge of the mischievous plotters, though the principal actor in the "fun" afterwards acknowledged it was too bad; but we will let our tale tell its own moral.

Mr. Royston was possessed of much mathematical talent, and withal that strong mechanical taste which is not unfrequently joined thereto. In his earlier career he had made it the recreation of some years to construct a telescope, an electrical machine, and air-pump, of no mean pretensions; and having found, to his great satisfaction, that his *protégé* was capable of appreciating their value and uses, they were occasionally drawn upon for part of an evening's entertainment. One evening, as they were replacing the electrical machine behind a large green curtain, drawn across a recess near the outer door of the outer room, Mr. Royston made a little remark on the shabbiness of the framework, particularly pointing to Frank's notice a recent fracture in one corner of the stand, which he had just mended with a patch of deal.

"It wants painting afresh: it ought to have been mahogany," he said.

Frank agreed, and expressed his surprise that any other wood should have been chosen for the frame; and Mr. Royston laughingly pleaded the softness of the wood for amateur hands. "It is an idle excuse," he added; and then, after expatiating a little on his skill of yore in the mysteries of carpentering, the apparatus was restored to its niche, and Frank having offered his services, if required, took his leave, with an

assurance from the gentleman that they should be demanded on the first opportunity.

One winter evening, a few days after the above-mentioned visit, Frank was alone in his room. He had wheeled his table to within almost a scorching contiguity with the fire, and sitting on a chair at its head, his feet resting on the claw, he pored listlessly over a copy of the Ethics of Aristotle, looking now and then most idly into a lexicon at his elbow. Presently he jumped up, stirred the fire into a blaze, and sitting on the edge of the table looked at it for a few seconds, then at his watch, and finally threw himself anew into his chair with a loud yawn.

"It's dry work," he said, aloud; "I must talk to myself for company. I wonder what business Cox has to sport his oak to-night. How studious all the fellows have become!"

He read a few minutes longer, and then leaned back again in his chair, to recover from his fatigues.

"I wonder what business composition-candles have with long snuffs; that puts me in mind of the old class-room."

Then another long yawn, concluded with,—

"I wish Pickwick were new. What did Ford mean by running off with the third volume of that book? I wasn't made for a brother of La Trappe."

Another yawn, and Frank shoved both hands into his pockets, and gazed with watery eyes on the ceiling.

"Wonder what Louis is about. I won't plague myself about that." Then an idle smile. "I wonder when the old boy is going to paint his machine. I dare say he'll want me when—Eh? come in."

His soliloquy was cut short by the entrance of his old friend.

"Mr. Digby, are you very busy to-night? Ah, I see, very

busy. It's a pity to disturb your studies; another night will do."

"I have quite done for to-night, sir," said Frank, answering the twinkle of the old gentleman's eye with another as dry.

"Any thing I can do, sir? Have you got the paint? I was just thinking about the machine."

"Well, then, the machine's the business; so you come in when you have left all safe, if you have quite done, and we'll commence."

"I'll be with you in a minute, sir," replied Frank, flying to open the door, and then coming back to shove his table and chair to a safe distance from the fire.

"Bravo!" he said; "very well done. I wonder the old boy doesn't see how short his toga is getting! that which comes gradually upon us we don't feel any inconvenience, as Aunt Huntley said of father's large family."

He blew out the candles, and packing up the fire to last till his return, hurried to the tutor's rooms, where he found arrangements had been made on a grand scale for the projected business. An old cloth had been laid on the large table in the outer room, and on this was placed the shabby machine. On a chair near the fire was a kind of cabinet, not unlike a medicine-chest, with labelled drawers and bottles; and an iron saucepan, warranted to hold a pint and a half, stood on the floor near. One or two large white gallipots, a saucer, and two half-pint bottles, one containing linseed-oil and the other turpentine, stood by the machine, on the large table; and a mixing-knife, a couple of new brushes, and a teaspoon completed the *tableau*.

Prepared as Frank was for paint-pots and brushes, he was at a loss to understand the meaning of these symptoms; and it was not till informed by Mr. Royston, that he understood

that they were not only to paint, but to make their own materials.

"I am not very fond of the smell of paint, Mr. Digby. And then, you see, we can make our own quantity; and not have the wasted residue hardening on the sides of the pots, till pots and all must be thrown away."

Frank expressed his great willingness to assist, and, with an air of urgent importance, began to handle the bottles and saucepan, with a great clatter and an inward sense of helpless ignorance as to their uses. His coadjutor stood looking at him with the most perfect gravity, till Frank, having carried the saucepan to the fire, and placed two gallipots and the bottle of oil on the mantelpiece, stood still and looked at him. Their eyes met.

"Well, sir?" said the tutor; "very well done. Now we had better lose no time."

Frank colored with suppressed laughter, but answered almost immediately,—

"It's your turn now, sir."

Mr. Royston brought two more gallipots with three paper packets from the chest, and placed them by Frank's trophies with the utmost stolidity, and then stood still once more. Frank fairly laughed now.

"Umph! Mr. Frank," said the gentleman, who often dropped Frank's surname when alone with his pupil; "our work won't go on very fast at that rate, and the pan, perhaps, will get burnt, so close to that great coal. Suppose you begin."

"Suppose I hold the saucepan while you mix," said Frank.

Mr. Royston shook his head and muttered something to himself, as he went again to the medicine-chest and took out another paper.

"Well, Mr. Frank, we shall have to mix some white-lead in this saucer."

"Yes, sir; here is the turpentine," replied Frank, with an indistinct recollection of the scent of turpentine connected with house-painting.

"Come, come," said Mr. Royston; "pretty paint I should have, if you were mixer, I see."

He hastily laid the white-lead on a chair, and removed the saucepan.

"Iron will burn, Mr. Digby."

"What's to be done, then?" asked Frank. "Are you going to mix up all the contents of those papers with the oil?"

"Ay, ay; please to put them down," exclaimed the old man. "The first thing is to boil the oil."

"Then here goes," said Frank, emptying the oil into the pan. "Now then, does some turpentine go with it?"

"I shall have some mischief done!" exclaimed Mr. Royston, running away a few feet from Frank, who threatened to mingle the contents of the oil and turpentine bottles. "Nothing but oil; now you do as you are bid, sir. Now you see," he added, as he took the turpentine from Frank's hand, placed it on another chair, and then put the saucepan on the fire: "The white-lead is to be mixed with oil, but we must boil the oil first, or the paint will never dry."

"Is it to be painted white?" asked Frank.

"White!—no; white-lead is the foundation; we must mix that with every and any color you want. We shall mix it with the yellow-ochre in this instance."

"It is to be satin-wood ingrained, then?" suggested Frank.

A little grunt from Mr. Royston was the only answer, and

Frank read aloud the names written on the papers on the mantelpiece.

"Yellow-ochre, Vandyke-brown, rose-pink, red-lead."

"It will look very handsome, won't it?" remarked Mr. Royston.

"I'm in a hurry to get to the brushing," said Frank, nearly poking his head into the chimney to look at the oil. He drew it back, as Mr. Royston called out,—

"Come, now, we must have some red-lead in the oil; that's the paper near you, Mr. Frank; there's a teaspoon on the table. Now then," he continued, as Frank brought it; "a few teaspoonfuls of that,—not the whole quarter of a pound."

"I think I did that cleverly," said Frank. "What is the use of that?"

"To assist in the drying process. There, we shan't want any more of that paper just now; put it down anywhere,—on that chair. Mustn't mix the papers, it would spoil our ingrained mahogany, eh? Never mind holding the sauce-pan; it won't boil over just yet; it absorbs a great deal of latent heat."

While the gentlemen stood awaiting the oil's pleasure, Mr. Royston described to Frank the process of mixing the paint; and they had passed very successfully through the lead and yellow-ochre to the turpentine, when a knock at the door disturbed the train of their ideas, and almost upon the knock a stout elderly gentleman marched in, buttoned up to the chin.

"Eh, Royston!" he exclaimed, in a hearty voice, "still at the old story. Ah!—'Spirits red and spirits gray,' mingling—"

"Umph!—why—so it is," rejoined the tutor, after a keen, quick look.

Then followed a hearty shaking of hands, and a few more equally hearty words between the apparently old friends. Frank was doubtful about the propriety of remaining; but the oil kept him still at his post, when Mr. Royston, in his great zeal to clear a chair for his visitor, seized the end of the red-lead paper, and scattered its contents on the seat; and Frank darted forward, handkerchief in hand, to remedy the accident.

"No,—no handkerchief; it's poison," cried Mr. Royston; "here's a piece of paper; clear the other chair, or bring another up, will you?"

But while Frank was accomplishing this, Mr. Royston darted to the fire with an exclamation, seizing hold of the handle of the saucepan; but the length of time it had been on the fire had heated it to an uncomfortable temperature, and he had recourse to his coat-tails, now, alas! too short to perform their wonted office. He puffed, and endeavored vainly to pull them round sufficiently to shield the whole of his hand. The fire had caught the oil.

"Ay, Digby! the chimney's on fire!—ay!"

Frank's hands were full. A glance revealed the state of things, and the glance instantly determined his course of action. Throwing bottle and papers on the table, he rushed out of the room to one or two of his nearest friends, amongst whom was Louis.

"Your brown Georges!—water-jugs ahoy!—The tutor's chimney's on fire, Louis; bring a blanket and your water-jug. Mr. Royston's room's on fire; the college will be burned down! Come, quick!"

The summons was instantly obeyed by all, Louis believing the danger implicitly,—as did one or two others; and they who suspected a joke followed not less readily, and arrived *en*

masse, just as Mr. Royston, in despair between his hands and the real danger that threatened the chimney, was running away with the saucepan behind him, having turned his back to the fire, and taken hold of the heated handle as he best might. It was not done too soon: a small quantity of the boiling oil had reached the fire, and a furious and alarming blaze was roaring up the chimney, while the rest of the inflammable fluid, blazing brilliantly behind the tutor, was running over on the carpet, threatening to scald severely the feet of the unsuccessful experimenter. This apparition of the strange flying meteor was more than those among Frank's friends who were in the secret could stand, and they rushed precipitately out of the room. Frank alone, with an unmoved countenance, advanced and emptied his jug on the fire. Poor Mr. Royston did not seem to know exactly what to do with his saucepan, and the blazing state of its overflowing contents deterred his friend from offering assistance at first. Frank was the first to approach him; but the tutor, abruptly rejecting his assistance, turned round to face the intruders, while the new-comer, venturing to release him from the nearly emptied pan, turned it upside-down on Frank's brown jug.

All this passed more rapidly than pen could describe; and Mr. Royston being at length at liberty to speak, faced poor Louis, the only one of the party now remaining, who was standing, with blanket extended in both hands looking on in undisguised vexation.

"Hey-day, young gentlemen! and what may you want, if you please?"

"The chimney, sir,—the chimney, sir,—you said the chimney was on fire," said Frank, modestly; "there was no time to lose."

Mr. Royston looked very hard at Frank, with lips tightly compressed.

"I am very sorry, sir," said Louis; "I believed it was very urgent, sir."

"And I believe you, Mr. Mortimer," said Mr. Royston kindly; "but we don't need the blanket, thank you."

Louis retired, and Frank, placing the saucepan inside the fender, began to rake out some of the blackened ashes.

"Thank you, Mr. Digby, that will do," said Mr. Royston, politely.

Frank took the hint, and withdrew to laugh with his friends, and the gentlemen were left alone.

"Well," said Mr. Royston, seating himself, "it's a failure. I think the best thing I can do, will be to clear away, and send for another pot of paint some day, ready made."

He rubbed his burnt hands, and looked carefully at the fire, now slowly recovering from the deluge of water Frank had poured on it, and then his eyes met his friend's, and by mutual consent they burst into a roar of laughter, no less hearty than that of the authors of the misfortune. Mr. Royston laughed on for several minutes, and then wiping his eyes, as if a sudden thought had struck him, he began to examine his coat, and after a careful survey looked up again, with a very significant "Umph—well, it was very shabby."

"There is something more underneath," said his friend inquiringly.

"I suspect so," replied the tutor. "A little accident to-night has let me into the secret of this affair. Pretending to help, indeed—that young scamp with the nice face and dark wavy hair, who drowned my fire, is at the bottom of it. My old coat gave great offence, I know; but he's the only one

that could get hold of it. Umph, Mr. Digby, I am afraid you are incorrigible."

"I believe you are not burnt. You have been so merry I forgot that," said his friend.

"No, thank you. The saucepan handle was a little hot, but that will go off in an hour or so. But seriously, this is not a little escape. Some of us might have been worse off. I thank God no hurt is done."

He remained reverentially silent for a few minutes, when his friend asked,—

"But what has that young fellow been doing, eh? something to your coat, besides bringing all his friends into the row?"

"Why, he has been cutting my coat shorter, somehow. It must have been very gradually. I fancied it used to be longer this very evening—it certainly used to come down to here. I warrant I can find out. I know enough to tax him with it—and my servant will soon get the rights of it."

"I hope he will," said the gentleman, rather sternly. "It is a sad piece of disrespect, that ought not to be passed over. He deserves to feel it."

"Umph!" said the old man. "I might do him an ill turn perhaps, some day; I might bring a few old tales to bear; and I might perhaps get him rusticated; but where would be the good, sir? Ah, Jenkins; young spirits will soon go —I won't sadden them. Let him do as he likes. I'll have him yet. He has a kind heart, and never plays his pranks when he fancies I have any thing like a headache. Poor fellow! He'll repent it yet, or I don't know him."

"It is a happy thing for him," said his friend, "that he has fallen into such tender hands."

"It is, perhaps," said Mr. Royston, with a little grunt. "Well, sir, time's very short. We have very little of it, to show kindnesses to one another—and he'll remember a kindness long after the queer old boy's head's laid low."

CHAPTER XVII.

"He that believeth shall not make haste."—*Is.* xxviii. 16.
"Who hath despised the day of small things?"—*Zech.* iv. 10.

Louis, now established a steady member of the reading men of his college, and supported and stimulated by his friend and tutor Hamilton, bid fair to pass through his university career very creditably, if not with any remarkable honors. My readers will imagine that he passed his "little go" very satisfactorily, notwithstanding his nervous trepidation beforehand. A little before this event took place, while the young tutor was looking over a translation of his pupil's from a chorus in Antigone, after Louis had been standing for the twentieth time a cross-examination on Euclid and Whateley's Logic, he suddenly rose from his chair, paper in hand, and laying it on the mantelpiece, studied it attentively for a few minutes, then stirring the fire with a decision and rapidity which Louis knew betokened the coming delivery of a weighty opinion, turned round, gathered up his coat-tails, and commenced as if his mind were filled with an idea.

"Louis!"

"Yes; what is it? You disapprove of that beautiful

poetical effusion, as sober Mr. Phillips used of my odes, plain matter-of-fact Hamilton," said Louis, smiling. "Well, never mind; I will give you some very staid prose next time."

"You are a bad guesser," said Hamilton, smiling in his turn. "I am afraid the reaction will be too great, if I tell you what I was thinking of: I had better be silent."

"Nay, now," said Louis, "if it be praise, make me happy."

A flush of pleasure, like an old school look, passed over Hamilton's face. He paused a minute, and advancing a step or two, he laid the paper on the table.

"That Chorus, Louis," he said emphatically, "is not only tolerable, it is beautiful; and I am a fastidious judge."

"My dear Hamilton," said Louis, in a tone of incredulity and expostulation.

"I am not joking," said Hamilton. "Were I to give that to any judge of poetry, he would say the same, depend upon it."

Louis looked still rather incredulous, and Hamilton continued—

"Now you may believe me, Louis; I am not too partial to you; I scold you enough, you know, and laugh at you too, and have done so for so many years, that I am afraid I shall to the end of the chapter."

"And you are laughing now, perhaps," said Louis.

"Well, if you will be so very modest and skeptical, I cannot help it," replied Hamilton; "but I mean what I have said. It is not perfectly faultless, as I will presently show; but let me tell you, there are not many men in Oxford who could write an off-hand translation in this style. I always considered you possessed of no little poetical taste in olden times. Now the principal fault in this is a little too much

liberty with the subject; you have introduced too much extemporaneous matter, but that, in an original poem, would be of no consequence, and the upshot of my beginning is, that I would strongly advise you to try for the Newdigate. Believe me, you are likely to stand a very fair chance for it."

"My dear Hamilton!" exclaimed Louis again.

"Try," replied Hamilton. "I will be judge quietly; and we can but condemn in private, if it should seem insignificant. What does the Italian proverb say, Louis? 'He who would be pope, must take it strongly into his head, and he shall be pope.' You bring me the outline of your proposed plan of operation, and let us discuss its capabilities."

"I shall not mind trying," said Louis; "but I cannot hope for much. I believe I could not persuade myself I should succeed. What is the subject for this year?"

"Nebuchadnezzar's first dream,—the great image," answered Hamilton.

"That will be delightful," said Louis; but his countenance grew very thoughtful.

"Hamilton, you have always humored me and advised me in every thing; I want—"

"What? a little advice now?" asked Hamilton.

"You know, Hamilton, you go on stirring me up, telling me constantly I must try for honors, and here I am just trembling about these tremendous *responsions;* and I am so absorbed in syllogisms, and axioms, and Q. E. D.'s, and all the host of small things, that really I don't know what it will be when I have to dive more deeply into these matters."

Hamilton smiled.

"Why, Louis, you do not know how gradually you are

now learning to dive into deeper matters; you will soon find that your regular study is telling more than you have any idea of. My rule always was,—Never leave till to-morrow what may be done to-day; and I have made you do the same. There will be hard work at last, undoubtedly; but never fear that if you keep steadily up to the mark from this time forward, you may and will succeed at the end. The fact is, if men chose to work steadily, we should have many more first and second class men. They often come up, as some quaint old writer observes, *golden scholars*, and turn out *silver students*, from want of that industry which a principle of right inspires, which would easily confirm what they have acquired with so much labor and expense, for the greatest part of their lives. I get quite chafed sometimes, when I see the prodigal waste of time, youth, strength, talents, and of those golden opportunities here offered, which will never return. It is not so much genius as perseverance that is wanted. Genius can accomplish nothing without perseverance, but perseverance may do much without genius."

"I allow that, Hamilton; but suppose I do succeed, what then?" and Louis looked very steadily at his friend.

"*What then!*" repeated Hamilton. "I am surprised to hear you ask, *what then?* Duty is duty to a conscientious mind: '*what thens*' we do not trouble ourselves about."

"But why is it my duty to gain honors?" asked Louis. "I can see it my duty to fit myself for my office, but how will gaining honors assist that, Hamilton? I can pass without honors."

"*Pass without honors!* to be sure you can," said Hamilton, contemptuously. "Louis, I detest that cry of *cui bono?* It seems to me either the demand of a lazy tasteless fool, or a very blind utilitarian."

"You are as vehement as if you could not support your argument," said Louis.

"Support it," repeated Hamilton; "I do not think I shall be inclined to take the trouble, where it is self-evident: but why this veering round, Louis? Have you no ambition?"

"More than you think, Hamilton," replied Louis, rather sadly: "so much, that I sometimes fear.—You have not forgotten Vernon; he won more honors than I could ever hope for with the hardest labor, and what did he say, Hamilton? I remember how sadly he said, '*How dieth the wise man? even as the fool. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.*'"

Hamilton's eyes glistened at the mention of his old friend, and he did not reply for a minute.

"It seems, Louis," he said gravely, "that your morbid imagination considers the attainment of earthly honors an earthly sin, to be visited by some immediate judgment. Remember, the right of an action depends upon the inciting motive. What will be your motive? I fancy it would not be the mere distinction of being first, which, indeed, you can hardly hope for."

"No; yet, I don't know," said Louis: "I am afraid that is the greatest motive."

"I do not think so," replied Hamilton, decidedly; "I know it ought not, nor ought it to be merely that of obtaining a distant fellowship, or such substantial emoluments as the university holds out to her successful sons. If you think your motive is mere love of distinction, throw your books away, and see whether your conscience will be perfectly satisfied with this immolation of your talents to the desire of extinguishing this feeling.

Louis stripped the feather from a pen, as he thoughtfully considered his friend's remarks.

"Will you do that, Louis?"

"Why, no, not exactly."

"But why not? Have you not enough self-denial?"

"I should not think it right, because my father expects me to study; at least, enough to take my degree. And I could not disappoint him."

"*Take your degree!* Pshaw! you come back again arguing in a circle," said Hamilton impatiently; "your father expects you to make the most of your time. Perhaps he does not deliberately expect you to take honors, but he expects you to work,—not to be idle; and if you do less than you can, it is idling. If you do not use the powers God has given you, in the situation in which he has placed you, you are not doing your duty: you are not doing MIGHTILY whatsoever your hands find to do; and, believe me, if you do not read for honors, you will not have sufficient occupation. You know you can go up to lecture day after day with little or no preparation, and surely, I need not remind you that the more learning you have, the more you will be fitted for any sphere; and in your calling, you will in time have to answer all kinds of objections, and refute all denominations of arguments, not only among the illiterate, but among those who will respect your opinion little if you cannot boast the same amount of refinement in education as themselves; and the higher you are above such in attainments, the more will your opinion have weight. In all knowledge is profit, Louis," said Hamilton, with increasing animation: "and I am sure it is a *sin*, a *great* sin, to make religion an excuse for idleness."

"Nay, Hamilton."

"You don't think so, I know," continued Hamilton stead-

ily; "but it is something like it. As for Vernon, poor fellow, it was not study that killed him, Louis; and if it had, should we be justified in saying that no one else was ever to study deeply again? If a man knows he is injuring his health by over-study, then it becomes a different matter; but till he does, let him do his utmost, as unto God and not unto men. Do your work diligently, and never mind whether you gain honors or not."

"Then why stimulate me?—why cannot I study without the idea of trying for a first class?"

"In the first place," said Hamilton, "you have no right to despise the influence of example; and though you may not think yours of much weight here, it may have a little in one or two cases, which is worth while; and, placing yourself among the religious, you are bound to show yourself a pattern of every thing that is lovely and of good report; and, again, you may fancy that you would make your bare duty a sufficient motive for working hard."

"I hope so," said Louis, quickly.

"And yet, I think, without some kind of standard by which you may measure yourself, how are you to know that you have done as much as you might, till you have measured your strength with others? and the remembrance that this race is to come off, will keep you up to the highest mark; and you owe it to your friends and tutors to give them all the gratification in your power."

"Thank you, dear Hamilton," said Louis, "you are as good a lecturer as you used to be, and I hope I shall profit as of old; but I am afraid you will be very impatient if I tell you any more of my ideas."

"Nay, I hope not unreasonably so," replied Hamilton. "What is scruple number two?"

Louis colored, and rising, came nearer his friend, and leaning his elbow on the mantelpiece, looked down thoughtfully, as if he knew not how to begin. Hamilton did not press him, but stood patiently with his back to the fire, awaiting his friend's communication, which he began in a hesitating, serious manner, as if it were much on his mind, and he was doubtful how it would be received.

"Hamilton, why is it so necessary that we should spend so much of our time in company with heathen writers, drinking in their religious sentiments and ceremonies, till their very expressions become our own? Why must clergymen study these things? Sometimes I feel as though I were doing wrong in spending so much time in reading these books. I have often thrown aside Aristophanes in my own room from a kind of fear; and I am afraid I never shall be able to study them to any purpose."

Louis spoke very feelingly, and looked at Hamilton as if he expected disapprobation; but Hamilton's face only expressed a degree of irresolution. He cleared his throat two or three times before he ventured to reply.

"I presume you will not dispute that you ought to have a competent knowledge of the dead languages?" he said.

"Certainly not," replied Louis.

"That knowledge you cannot obtain but through these works. Of course, you cannot expect heathen authors to write Christian works, and you must consider it a question of business, not of heart. You feel no compunction in perfecting yourself in Hebrew, and you are as well aware as I am, that a critical knowledge of Greek is *most essential.* If there are any writers that distress your feelings particularly, you can give them a more cursory inspection than others. I cannot help thinking that you are in rather a morbid state of

conscientiousness. As to the study of these, I do not pretend to account for it; but it is a remarkable fact, that almost immediately upon the revival of learning in Florence, when Lorenzo the Magnificent established his schools for the study of Plato, and drew all the learned to court,—I say, almost coeval with this, and the discovery of several rare Greek manuscripts, the glorious Reformation burst upon astonished Europe."

"God's time had come, Hamilton."

"It had, Louis, and He turned events to His own great purposes. Perhaps this access of knowledge, and study of philosophy, taught men to think each one for himself, and made him more bold to stand alone. It is a known fact, that wherever Romanism is, there is ignorance and darkness of the grossest description; and wherever learning goes, men in a measure throw off the trammels of Rome. Mind, I do not say they become sons of God,—that *is a far different thing*. But why is it you never thought these studies wrong before?"

Louis did not at first reply. At length he answered, thoughtfully,—

"Perhaps because I simply thought it right to improve my time, and do as much as I could, without any regard to the matter of my studies. But now I seem to be left more on my own responsibility, and in a great measure to choose my own line of study, and it has often struck me lately. I am told to do all to the glory of God. How can I imbue myself with heathen sentiments to his glory? The great work—His work,—His glory, seems to be lost in all I do here."

"My dear Louis, you are very much mistaken, depend upon it," said Hamilton, throwing himself into a chair, and

speaking rapidly; "you are taking a very narrow view of your present position. I fancy you imagine that the only way of glorifying God is by being constantly engaged in preaching to others. You are not called upon to do that now; instead of that, you are to learn what will qualify you for it afterwards. You must look forward, and remember that you are only preparing to begin life, and pursuing these studies as a means to an end. Louis, why is it that so many pious and judicious men send their sons here, if these studies are so deleterious?"

"That has often puzzled me," said Louis.

"Why is it," continued Hamilton, speaking rapidly, "that so many clear-headed pious men are poured out of our universities year after year, if *all* is evil there? Depend upon it, *humanly speaking*, it is because each one is taught to *think;* because they insensibly learn, through the medium of these very studies, to seize hold of all the really necessary, and to reject the superabundant. They learn to reason; they see how far man's unaided intellect can guide him, and how necessary the light of Revelation; how continually men in all ages arrive, to a certain distance, at the same conclusion,—but can go no further."

He paused, as Louis remarked,—

"Piety is something distinct from this."

"I grant it, Louis; yet, in the long history of the world's darkness, a long, painful, laboring process has always preceded the dawn of light. We cannot understand why it was necessary that the whole world should be left, with the exception of one nation, in gross darkness and ignorance for four thousand years; yet it was so. Why was it that Moses, destined for his high office, was educated in a heathen land, made learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians, and passed

eighty years in obscurity before he was deemed ready? The conflict seemed necessary. And to leave other instances, and to come still further on, Louis; you want to preach, to instruct, before your time. The holy child Jesus, whose learning of twelve years of age made Him the wonder of sages and doctors,—who yearned to 'be about His Father's business,' retired into obscurity; and till He began to be about thirty years of age, He taught us in that meek submission to a conflict, which in His own soul He could not need, that before every great work, is a time of longer preparation and patient waiting. Before manhood, comes childhood. Why is it that the embryo man should be allowed to pass so large a portion of his life in *folly?*—for we are told childhood and youth are folly. God is not in need of instruments to do His own work, and till the time comes in His own providence, it is presumption to think we can find out a better way for ourselves. We must be content to do nothing and be nothing when He chooses we shall be nothing and do nothing, and quietly prepare ourselves for the time when He shall find work for us. I am persuaded that half the errors of fanaticism arise from weak-minded men fancying they are called to some great work without preparatory knowledge, forgetting that miraculous gifts of language and immediate revelation have long ended, and that it is not apparently the Almighty's will that man should become suddenly and supernaturally fitted for this greatest of offices. You must not 'despise the day of small things,' Louis. We would all rather that knowledge and fitness should come intuitively; but the conflict and discipline of labor is necessary—man is destined to it; and to me there is something delightful in the power bestowed on us of attaining to something by our own efforts. In some things, indeed, our strength is to sit

still, but in most the Lord speaks to His people to *go forward*. Here, on this earth, Louis, goes on the constant chipping of the stones for the temple above; the rest will be in the land beyond, where each polished stone shall be silently laid when the necessary painful toil is over; and the building goes gradually on; stone after stone is carried above; and none that is placed there, Louis, thinks the conflict on earth too great."

"Oh, Hamilton!" exclaimed Louis, warmly; "oh, for that time when 'the headstone shall be brought with shoutings.'"

"Ay; but Louis," rejoined Hamilton, with a quiet, sweet smile—"but you remember, '*he that believeth shall not make haste.*'"

There was a dead silence, and Louis looked up once or twice at his friend, but showed no inclination to break it. Hamilton sat with his eyes intently fixed on the ground in profound thought, till Louis sighed, when he raised them to his pupil's face with a look of inquiry.

"My dear Hamilton, I cannot tell you how very sweetly the Word of God comes from you, especially when you get philosophical. I am afraid you will think it a great sign of weakness in me, if I tell you what an aching sensation I always experience whenever I hear any thing approaching to a philosophical disquisition on the origin of evil, and the reasons why the world was suffered to lie so long in darkness, and the great good to be learned by the history of this or that heathen nation, as I have often heard here. Nothing ever seems satisfactorily proved to my mind, and what is advanced and pursued seems to me to run away from the Bible sadly. I assure you when you and Berry were arguing the other night on Schlegel's 'Philosophy of History,' I began to

wonder whether I was awake or alive, whether any thing had ever existed, and whether there was any harm in any wickedness that had ever been perpetrated, and you were moderate compared to Moreton and Osborne. These things do not suit me. If I heard much of them, I am afraid I should almost become a skeptic, but for one great safeguard. I *know* in my heart that the Bible is TRUE, and it is impossible to express the precious power of a passage from that dear book. I feel when you bring it forward as you do, you will not mislead me."

"Mislead you! no, I hope not," said Hamilton, in a tone of surprise.

"Yet had you not spoken to me of Moses, and above all of our LORD, I should not have been satisfied, Hamilton, though I trust I am now. When you spoke of the darkness of the world, and the good to be gained by the consideration of man's mind and its capabilities in all ages, I was unconvinced; but the rationale of your view flashed across me as light, when you spoke of the thirty years of HIS meek submission to an earthly parent. Hamilton, what a friend you are to me! I wonder how I should get on without you to set me straight."

"How, Louis! you are forgetful to-day," said Hamilton, gravely. "'My soul hangeth upon THEE. Thy right hand hath upholden me.' Remember HE is a nail in a sure place, and they who are upholden by Him shall never fall."

Louis was about to speak, but Hamilton continued without noticing his attempts,—

"You remember old Latimer. In his youth he carefully searched and made up his mind on certain doubtful and disputed points, and having once done this, he did not allow it to be disturbed by conflicting opinions. Follow his example,

asking earnestly an Almighty blessing; let your mind be carefully made up, and then let no doubts disturb your course of action. In my opinion, your course is plain. With the system pursued for preparing clergymen for their office, you have nothing to do; you must pass through it, and with your principles you ought to go through in the best possible manner. Look at Henry Kirke White and Henry Martyn—you may surely follow their examples; and as a proof how a mind attuned to divine things sees them in all, read again, if you have read it before, Martyn's impressions on preparing a portion of the Æneid, when appointed examiner. You need not fear, Louis. Do not distress yourself with scruples." He paused a minute, as if thinking, and then added, "I have a dear old friend at home, Louis, with whom you would like to talk. I am thinking now, if I had given you some of her thoughts instead of my own, it might have been still better. She would talk to you of the *faith* of studying in whatever path your peculiar power points out. She would ask you why your impulses were given you, and who gave them, and she would make you answer this question, which I must leave you now to answer by yourself, or to me when we have more time. The life of a Christian is by faith. Is faith most exercised, when we can satisfactorily answer the WHY that rises up, or when we fulfil a duty without seeing any immediate result, or obtaining any personal gratification therefrom? But we must part now. To your toilet. You do not know what time it is. Hall—Hall, *au revoir.*"

Louis hastily bade his friend adieu, and hurried away.

When he was alone that evening, he made his perplexities a subject for prayer; nor did he forget the project Hamilton had set before him, in his petitions, that he might be directed aright, and might diligently use all his talents, solely

to the glory of Him who had bestowed them, and who has commanded us to cast all our care on Him, for He careth not only for the great cares and trials, which come seldom upon some men, but for each little perplexity, each little anxiety, that would draw the soul from its resting-place to dependence upon itself. The language of each Christian heart should be that of Moses, "If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence." So Louis's breathed petition was, "If I may not do this to Thy glory, take away the power from me. Prosper not my handiwork, if it speak not for Thee," and he rose from his prayer, refreshed and strengthened for his work.

A word in season, how good it is! Many times did Louis's mind dwell happily on the remembrance of the nail in the sure place—of Him of whom he could say, "My soul hangeth upon Thee."

My soul hangeth upon Thee—hangeth upon THEE! ah, there is the Christian's safety: hangeth upon the sure anchor; resteth upon the everlasting rock; and the waves of infidelity, of error, superstition, and mysticism, may dash around and overthrow the self-reliant, but He whose feet are surely placed, shall never be moved. There is the only security. HE is the *only* refuge—the only foundation. He whose soul hangeth upon Christ shall be upholden with the right hand of Omnipotence.

A few days after this conversation, Louis brought Hamilton a slight plan of his poem, which after many considerable deliberations on Hamilton's part, obtained his decided approval. And Louis, now furnished with a very congenial employment, worked away for the next few months very busily. Kind, unwearied Hamilton, though studying for a fellowship, and dividing his time among nine or ten pupils,

often spared his ancient *protégé* a half-hour to criticise his production; and the work was rapidly brought to a conclusion under the most favorable auspices, and was duly sent in to the proper authorities to await the mighty decision.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"I have, and most unwillingly, of late
Heard many grievous—
Grievous complaints of you, which being considered,
Have moved us and our council, that you shall
This morning come before us."

King Henry VIII.

We must now be allowed to go backward to the beginning of the last chapter, where it is stated that our hero passed his "little go" with great credit. One evening, a few days after this event, he was alone in his rooms. His tea apparatus had not been long removed, and he was deeply engaged with his Bible and Keith's "Evidences of Prophecy," so wrapped up in his employment that he did not hear two sharp little knocks at his door, and, in consequence, was not a little startled by the apparition of his cousin close to his elbow.

"Are you deaf or cataleptic this evening?"

Louis started to his feet, and it was a second or two before he comprehended the nature of the interruption.

"What absorbs you so much?" asked Frank, as he took up the book that lay near him. "Grote—hum! Keith—ah, that's a book I recommend to every one!"

"How, is it a favorite of yours?"

"It is a favorite of Dr. Wilkinson's; and as I always place great dependence upon his judgment, I cannot err."

"You take his word for it as regards yourself, I suppose," remarked Louis.

"Just what I say," returned Frank. "But now those fellows will pull down my apartments, if I don't be quick on my errand. I have a party of *musicians* at my rooms, quiet, steady fellows; and we've some new music to try, and—and there's a piano accompaniment, and the long and the short is, we want the loan of your piano, and your fingers to play for us. Will you lend us your room for to-night? we'll be very good."

Louis hesitated a minute.

"Come now, you'll enjoy it yourself. Do you know Purcell?"

"No, nothing, except a solitary anthem and a chant."

"Then there's a treat for you. Come, you are too much of a hermit: there's nothing sinful in music."

"Well, on one condition I will," said Louis. "Remember, I am very sedate, and enough of an old woman not to like a noise. I stipulate for early hours and no 'row.'"

"It's a thing I never do," said Frank, with a flourish. "What a timorous hare you are, to be afraid of a set of quiet musical men!"

Louis looked rather doubtfully at Frank, and shook his head.

"What instruments, Frank?"

"A flute, two violins, *et cetera*."

"Well, as *et cetera* is coming, remember, honor bright, Frank, you must not get up a row here, nor stay after eleven."

"A thing I never do," said Frank.

"As to what you never do, Frank, remember what a friend—"

"That's just what I say," interrupted Frank. "I always was very accommodating myself: now I'll order our spread in here—eh? What's that? ah, Mr. Louis, you practise pistol-shooting, do you?"

His quick roving eyes had lighted on a handsome pistol, which lay on the mantelpiece, and he marched up to examine it more minutely.

"It's not mine," said Louis, quietly. "Moreton left it here this morning, and I shall be very glad when he calls for it. I have a morbid dislike of firearms, and I really don't know whether it is loaded or not."

"Poor chicken!" said Frank. "But I mustn't stay: prepare your quiet self in two minutes for an irruption of the Huns."

"They were very remarkable for tranquillity," rejoined Louis, beginning to clear the table of the books of reference with which it was crowded.

"Very," returned Frank. "Adieu. I'll be with you 'ere the leviathan can swim a league.'"

Although Louis dearly loved music, and by no means disliked the idea of a musical evening at any time, he was not altogether without apprehensions as to the character of Frank's party; nor were his fears calmed when his door was once more violently flung open, and Ford marched in, bearing a couple of candles, followed by half a dozen more with music-books and instruments; Mr. Halhed bringing up the rear with a violoncello. One or two of the incomers were speaking acquaintances of Louis's, and they performed the ceremony of thanking him for the use of his room. Frank, who had stayed behind to arrange the "spread" with his scout, soon arrived and introduced his unknown friends as Marsden, Hale, Smith, Barton, and Cox, with an intimation, something

between a request and a command, they would be pleased to know each other.

In spite of Louis's previous disinclination to the introduction, he did the honors of his rooms with a courtesy and elegance that won the musicians, and they were soon gathered round the table, from which Louis had removed all traces of his studies, looking over the new music, which proved to be an arrangement of some of the music of "King Arthur," with a piano accompaniment, and a chorus from "Boadicea."

"We have been making a sad mess of them," said Hall, "because the cornet-à-piston got so horridly out."

The cornet-à-piston becoming fierce at this, retaliated upon the violins, and where the argument might have ended we do not know, had not Frank come to the rescue by declaring that all were wrong, because they wanted a rallying-point.

"Then," exclaimed Ford, "Hall was taken up so abominably with the title-pages."

"I deny it," exclaimed Hall.

"Why now, didn't you and Halhed get talking in the bar's rests, and when you ought to have come in? all we heard was, '*It's the Elizabethan. No; the Roman. I can prove it.*'"

There was a hearty laugh.

"By the by, Louis, did you ever see any thing like these letters?" said Frank.

"They are singular," replied Louis; "but I have often seen printing of that description on handbills."

"Do you know the origin of italics?" asked Ford: "I never found any one who did perfectly. It's rather curious."

Louis having replied in the negative, Ford proceeded to enlighten him.

"When the renowned grandson of the Alban king had thatched the first palaces in Rome, he invented the Roman

alphabet, in order that the heads of his mud college might be able to prosecute their studies. Determined that every thing his people did should be upright and straightforward, the first alphabetical characters familiar to the juvenility of Rome were of the plain upright description known to us as the Roman alphabet. Afterwards, when his posterity began to be a little less particular in their dealings, they were ashamed that their letters should evince more uprightness than themselves, and an ancient writer in the reign of Claudius Cæsar, quoting a passage in one of the lost books of Livy, relates that a lawsuit was commenced between a barbarian and one of the richest merchants, because the latter had written an upright letter to the former, without even intending it as such. So they invented *italics* for the purpose of informing the public that they only intended to *lean* towards the right, and would not be answerable for consequences at any time, should they fail in doing so."

"As for the Elizabethan," added Frank, "it is well known that her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, being rather crooked in her dealings, wished her dispatches to be taken in the opposite sense to that in which she wrote them, or at all events, to be so ambiguous that no one but herself could make head or tail of them. Thereupon she caused the alphabet bearing her name to be framed, to the end that all the letters should look as much like one another as possible."

"And I think she succeeded uncommonly well," rejoined Louis, laughing.

"Ford, may I ask you what writer you spoke of who quotes the lost decade of Livy?" asked Halhed. "I should like to peruse his writings."

A hearty burst of laughter followed the inquiry, and Ford having referred his friend to some unknown name, suggested

that the performance should be no longer delayed. Louis repaired to the piano, and after a proper amount of fanning of leaves, and such queries as "Where am I to begin? Where do I come? What key's this? How many blacks are there?" and exclamations from wind instruments, that the piano was too low, and from the stringed that it was too high, they at last commenced, Frank acting as conductor, and two of his friends as audience. Louis's own part at sight was as much as he could look after at first; but his performance was rapturously applauded at the conclusion of "Britons, strike home;" and though each performer had been tolerably independent, all were very well satisfied with the noise except the conductor, who greatly exasperated the players by declaring his unqualified disapprobation of the whole. However, it is not on such occasions that the beauty of the music adds much to the enjoyment, and in the succeeding efforts the party grew merrier and merrier, and noisier and noisier, even Louis becoming a little infected, and thoroughly enjoying the beautiful music, which possessed all the charms of novelty for him. As they had the words of two choruses, they varied their entertainment by singing, and were in the height of the fun when the supper appeared. Louis continued playing the piano part of "Come if you dare," when Frank whispered something to Ford, who went immediately to the mantelpiece, and carefully examined Louis's watch, which stood there in a rosewood stand. Frank meantime waited at the piano till a convenient pause, and then announced to Louis that supper was ready.

"And I am quite ready," said Louis, jumping up. "Really this music is quite delightful."

"And you play so capitally," said Hall. "Really you are quite a genius."

"Now, Frank," said Louis, putting his cousin forward, "I have lent my rooms, and you are host."

"Nay, I cannot think of taking the head of another man's table," said Frank. "We are all much obliged for your assistance, but I could not be comfortable in taking that place."

"Come, Mortimer, be reasonable," cried several voices; "and don't oblige us to use force to our host. No one sits down till you take your place."

Louis obeyed the unanimous call. As he drew near the table, his guests were standing round, and there was a little lull in the noise. It seemed to invite what Louis's own heart dictated to him; but a mistaken feeling of shame stayed his lips, and even while lingering, ere he seated himself, he could not openly acknowledge Him who crowns the table of His creatures with plenty. A moment more—but a moment of irresolution, and the time was past, the noise returned, and the calls on the host were uninterrupted, but his pleasure was gone. With a sinking heart and listless ear he heard the noisy jokes and bad puns, and scarcely made an effort to appear interested in any thing that followed, only anxious for some opportunity of repairing, if possible, his lukewarm omission. He hardly knew how he divided the game before him, or when he poured out the wine, which he took with some one at the further end of the table, just putting the glass mechanically to his lips, his only thought was, "I have denied Christ; I have been unwilling to acknowledge my principles."

"Why, Mortimer, you are tired," said Ford. "You played like a trooper. Glass of wine, to keep up your spirits."

Others recommended this infallible panacea for fatigue,

and paid equally equivocal compliments on his services. Then one remarked on the "jollity" of the evening, and every failure and success was recapitulated, the nature of music, and certain scraps of its history discussed, with various anecdotes relative to the point. For the wisdom of all we do not pretend to vouch. Then one started a novel idea in defence of their eccentric time: "That you only learn rules in order to break them, according to taste."

"Like the yeomanry," said Frank. "As the old woman said, '*Only look at the soldiers! don't they do it beautiful? pulling out their swords all one after the other!*' I maintain that time, strict undeviating time, is the greatest requisite in music, gentlemen."

"I defy time," exclaimed his adversary, from the opposite side of the table. "I say melody, taste."

"Feeling," cried another.

"Harmony," said a third.

"Noise," remarked a fourth.

"Come; you're an oracle, a judge in musical matters," said Ford, turning the attention of the company towards their important companion, who sat with a sententious face, listening as though the other speakers were children.

"Now, Halhed, you're a judge," was the general call; but there was something so mischievously expectant in the tone, that any one less obtuse would have declined offering an opinion on the knotty point. Mr. Halhed was not quick-sighted, however, and on being addressed, he gathered himself up very portentously, and replied, in a solemn, deliberate tone,—

"Demosthenes was once asked what was the first requisite for an orator. He replied, '*Pronunciation.*' He was asked what was the second requisite. He still replied, '*Pro-nun-*

ci-a-tion.' What was the third requisite, 'PRO-NUN-CI-A-TION.' So if I am asked what is the chief requisite in concerted music, I reply, '*Unanimity.*' If I am asked what is the second requisite, I answer, '*U-na-ni-mi-ty.*' What the third, 'U-NA-NI-MI-TY.' "

This oration, delivered in a pompous and extremely solemn manner, was heard throughout with the most profound attention, but was hardly ended, when the room rang again with peals of laughter, intermingled with cries of "Encore!" "Bravo!" "You've hit the right nail on the head, Halhed!"

Ford patted Halhed on the back encouragingly, and told him he would be an orator before his grandmother. "Unanimity's the thing, that's certain."

The orator's gratification was apparently doubtful, for, after looking inquiringly from face to face, he folded his arms, and sank gloomily back in his chair with compressed lips, while Ford filled his glass, and pressed him to drink after his exertions; and then, finding his efforts vain, he proposed Mr. Peter Halhed's health in a bumper. Then Halhed grew sulky, and would not return thanks, and the noise waxed more furious, and the rebel to the customs of society was dragged on his feet, in spite of Louis's earnest remonstrance. He possessed, however, sufficient obstinacy to adhere to his determination, and in great anger, on the first convenient opportunity, took up his cap and left the room, with a severe remark on the ungentlemanly manner in which he had been treated.

Louis hoped that his departure might be a signal for a break-up, but he was woefully mistaken, for they sat on and laughed at Halhed, and told tales of him, and then sang songs and drank wine so fast, that Louis began to be seriously alarmed for the consequences. He tried to draw Frank's at-

tention; but Frank either would not understand, or was not inclined to notice the hint. At length, the vocalists having exhausted their stock, Louis was called upon for his contribution, having twice evaded the demand previously. Frank knocked on the table with the handle of his knife to command silence.

Louis colored, and rose.

"I beg to be excused, gentlemen."

"No excuses!" cried several voices.

Louis still remained standing.

"It is time we concluded our Bacchanalia."

"Cough him down."

And, accordingly, each guest was immediately seized with a violent fit of coughing.

When this had a little subsided, Louis essayed again.

"Frank, you are a man of honor; you know my hours are early, and I cannot have this noise any longer here; I am sure it must be nearly twelve o'clock."

"Hear, hear!" cried Frank, "the man's demented; it's not so by me."

"Nor by me," said Ford. "I am afraid our company has been dull, Mortimer?"

Louis looked puzzled, and left the table to look at his watch; the hands pointed to twenty minutes to eleven; still he did not feel convinced. He looked doubtfully at the party, and then quietly said,—

"I think there must be some mistake; I will inquire of one of my neighbors."

But before he could execute his intention, his progress was arrested by Ford, who placed his back to the door, and then locking it, put the key into his pocket. Louis's eyes flashed.

"In my own rooms, sir!"

"*In my own rooms!*" echoed Ford, insolently. "An Englishman's house is his castle. When you comply with our civil request. You know the old proverb, 'Birds that can sing and won't sing ——.' Come, now, don't be determined and fiery, and all that sort of thing; you lent your rooms till eleven, you know."

"To be sure," said Frank; "and by the united concurrence of our watches it is not eleven yet. They can't all have got wrong on purpose to spite you, Louis. It is very ungracious of you to want to get rid of us so soon. Come, sit down; we'll go at the proper time; I want to hear a little more of 'King Arthur.' Let's see if we can do it better."

"It is against all grammar and logic," said Hall, "to say a bad thing can be better,—bad, worse, worst."

"Then let us see if we can do it worse," replied Frank. "'Nothing venture, nothing have.'"

As they made a motion to move, Louis returned to the table, in the hope of being able to say grace; but before he could say a word, the table was vacated, and the piano surrounded with clamorous cries for the pianist. Louis lingered a minute, till three of the musicians, one on each side, and one behind, forced him to the piano, and, as by his own watch it was not the hour on which he had fixed, he mechanically resumed his occupation.

"I say, Ford," remonstrated Hall, "we have rather too much noise,—too much horn obligato. Even supposing you were a first trumpet, I don't know that it would save us from the unpleasant consequences of keeping the dons awake. *Entre nous*, I'd advise you to keep your horn a little more in the background."

"My horn!—no envious reflections, base insinuator!"—replied the accused, blowing a blast of defiance; "I should like

to know what would become of the music, if the cornet-à-piston were *tacet*."

"We'll show you, if you will be quiet till we get to the end."

"Come, Louis," said Frank, "sing this with me."

"No more now: I cannot sing any more to-night," replied Louis, rising from his seat. "It is now past eleven, and I cannot have any more music here, Frank. I have relied on your honor, and now you must go. Remember, I am responsible for the noise in my rooms. Mr. Ford, will you unfasten the door?"

"I'll sport the oak," said Ford, "and then we may set the dons at defiance."

"This conduct is not to be borne," said Louis; "Frank—"

"My dear Louis, you are too huffy," said Frank, confidentially. "Take it in good part and sing them a song, and we'll go. I shall not be able to get them out without it."

But Louis was inflexible. He seated himself on the sofa, and would not be cajoled into doing any thing. Ford fastened the outer door, and then relocking the inner, commenced a vigorous attack on Louis, whose determined resistance, in their excited state, only incited them the more. He declared at length, he would play "Britons, strike home!" till Louis gave them a song, and he continued blowing loud blasts till his friends, in self-defence, took their several instruments, and commenced a new description of a Dutch concert, on an extended scale. But the uproar was by this time destined to receive a check.

Mr. Royston, who had been deeply absorbed in an abstract mathematical calculation, now became sensible, in the stillness of the night, that an unusual noise was proceeding from a room on his side of the "quad," and after enduring it for a few minutes, rose and sallied forth to ascertain whence it issued. As

he left his rooms, the sounds burst on him in all their power, and directed him to the place whence they came. He had nearly reached Louis's rooms, when he met Mr. L., who had been roused from his slumbers by the same uproar; and mutually expressing their surprise at hearing so much noise from such a quarter at that hour, they proceeded to knock at the closed door.

The musicians were at the height of their uproar, and wild with excitement. At first the repeated knocking did not arouse them. Louis was the first who heard it, and starting from the sofa, he stilled the noise for a moment by pointing to the door.

"Hey! what?" said Ford.

A loud and continued rapping. The musicians listened, and Frank with open mouth and eyes looked from one to the other.

"*Nox erat*," he said at length, with ludicrous solemnity—"There was a knock."

"The enemy's come," said Ford.

A voice was now heard, but what was said was undistinguishable. It was answered by Frank in the same tone, "'I see a voice; I hear a face.'"

"Ford, give me the key," said Louis.

"I don't know what I have done with it."

"Find it quickly; or some one break open the door somehow."

"Now, what a wasteful young gentleman you are to go spoiling good locks in that manner," said Ford ironically, as Louis seized the poker and began to exert his own strength on the door.

"Frank, help me," he cried. "I have not the least idea how to do this."

But Frank seized the cornet-à-piston instead, and blew the first few notes of "Come, if you dare!" and the others stimula-

ted fiddled away in defiance; while Louis, after vainly using the poker, tried a knife on the lock and broke it. At every interval of the noise, the outer rapping, and a command, partially audible, to open the door, was heard, but in a few minutes it ceased.

"The enemy's routed," said Frank, as he laid his trumpet down; "and I think we had better decamp as soon as the coast's clear."

"We shall get into a pretty mess," said one who was more sober than the rest. "We have forgotten that the dons are not deaf. Hadn't we better be off at once? It only wants a quarter to one."

"Frank! is this your honor?" said Louis, indignantly.

But Frank was not to be touched by any appeal at present. He was, however, sufficiently sensible to the necessity of going immediately, and having prevailed upon Ford to find the missing key, the door was unlocked and the instruments shouldered.

"You had better leave them till to-morrow," said Frank; "you will run better without them."

There was a grand searching for caps, and hardly had each possessed himself of one, when the knocking was renewed with double fury.

"We are done for," said Hall.

"We are not without arms," said Frank, snatching the pistol from the mantelpiece, and planting himself firmly opposite the entrance as Louis threw open the door. "Stand back, whoever you are. I'll shoot the first man that enters."

The words had hardly passed his lips when Mr. Royston entered, and a loud report told that the threat had been put into execution. A loud cry from Louis at the instant the weapon was raised warned the good tutor to stand back, and

a kind prompt hand knocked up the pistol at the moment it was fired, or the old man had never spoken again. The bullet whizzed by, and lodged in the wall above the door. There was a dead silence of horror. Frank let the weapon fall, and turning white, staggered against Ford, groaning, "Oh, oh! I did not know it was loaded!"

He was at this instant seized by a rough hand and pushed behind the door, and Mr. Royston's voice said huskily, "Not one word, sir; not one word. Don't betray yourself, or—"

He did not finish his sentence, for a fresh party had entered at the moment. What passed neither Louis nor Frank could well say they knew. They knew that an investigation was going on, that it was discovered that the pistol was loaded, and that, finally, they were all called upon to give their names, and were led each one to his rooms, with an injunction to keep them till further notice. Frank longed to speak to Mr. Royston, but that gentleman talked constantly of the enormity of the sin and the necessity of making an example, and never approached him, nor exhibited the least commiseration for him.

When all were gone, and the last footstep had died away in silence, Louis began gradually to realize what had happened, and to understand the serious position in which he was placed. He stood with folded arms for full ten minutes after his door was closed, looking abstractedly on the desolate scene before him. He then threw himself on the sofa, and, burying his face in the pillow, neither moved nor spoke for an hour; and when he next raised his head, the room was in darkness. He threw himself on his knees, and spread his case before his God; and gradually the burden grew lighter, and a consciousness of forgiveness for his part in that night's errors, and a conviction of blamelessness with respect to the

uproar came; but then as fears for himself were lightened, those for his cousin increased. With his usual sweetness, he forgot Frank's breach of word, which had brought him and the whole party into the scrape, and all the rough usage he had received, and only thought of the trouble in which his tormentors were, and the slight hope that appeared for any of them. At last, worn out, he sank into a light doze, and woke as the first gray morning light stole into his chamber, and exhibited to his view the wreck of the previous night's revelry;—remains of dishes, broken glass, empty decanters, stained and crumpled tablecloth. Here a knife and fork on the floor; there a black bottle rolling. A violin under foot in one direction; the obnoxious cornet-à-piston in another. Pieces of music in various parts, with loose and torn leaves. He looked sadly on all, with a fervent determination *never* to have such another morning sight in his rooms, and drew back the partially closed window-curtains. Over the tops of the opposite buildings a yellow rim of light was gradually displacing the gray mantle of early morning; and conspicuously before him in solitary sweetness, as a gleam of promise, shone the fair morning star. The stillness, the calmness of that quiet sky seemed to shed its influence over his mind; and he knelt down before the window, and in the depths of his full heart breathed the unuttered petition which asked every thing for His sake, who has said, "I am the bright and morning star!"

When he rose from his knees, and retired at length to bed, it was in the sweet consciousness that nothing should harm him, that all would yet be well; and this sweet consciousness comes often to the trusting child of God. "Who shall harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" The world cannot understand his security—his sure confidence.

Louis was in a heavy slumber when the scout's summons roused him. He answered mechanically, and fell asleep again till the chapel bell began to ring; when, remembering he was a prisoner, he dressed deliberately, and went into his sitting-room, now comfortably arranged for breakfast. He had scarcely begun to make his coffee, when the door was unceremoniously burst open, and Hamilton walked in, in a state of great excitement. He closed the door, and then stood still near it as Louis rose, and without noticing his morning welcome, began—

"Louis, what have you been about? You have got yourself into a pretty scrape now, have you not?"

As Louis did not answer, but stood looking at him with changing color, Hamilton commenced a hasty march up and down the room, without speaking. Presently, stopping suddenly, he exclaimed—

"What possessed you to have that wild set here? Louis, you want looking after like a baby. Just the old, old story! —the old, old story!" he continued, resuming his march. "Well, you have done it now. You will be rusticated as sure as fate—as sure as fate, if not worse; and I dare say you have not had much hand in it. It is really the most vexatious piece of business. Well, you deserve it, too, for that terrible shilly-shallying habit of yours: nothing but experience ever will teach you to stand by yourself."

Louis placed the cup he was holding on the table, and looked steadily at Hamilton, with a face from which all color seemed to have flown, but he did not speak.

"You seem to be wonderfully cool and unconcerned," said Hamilton, impatiently; "do you understand what has happened, Mr. Mortimer?"

"Quite," replied Louis, with calmness; "quite: but I

could not help it. And I feel I am not to blame even for having them here; and if I suffer, it will be with a clear conscience."

Hamilton shook his head, but paused in his walk, and Louis continued:

"Sit down and hear me quietly; and perhaps you will think, after all, I have not been very much to blame."

Hamilton declared he could hear very well standing; and Louis, reseating himself, began his story,—his friend moving up and down the room at intervals till it was concluded; when he drew near the fire, and taking a chair, sat for a few minutes in deep thought. Louis watched the relaxed expression of his countenance anxiously.

"Well," he said at length, "it is better than I expected. Mr. Frank deserves every thing, he does indeed. He'll get a pretty lesson this time, however; I am glad of it."

"Hamilton!" said Louis, reproachfully.

"A man who sacrifices his word of honor to a practical joke, deserves all the punishment he meets with. Badly as I have always thought of his low joking, I did not think that of Frank."

"Nor did I," said Louis; "yet I am *very* sorry."

Hamilton would acknowledge no tenderness of feeling on the point.

"Had he kept his word," he said, "it would all have been well. He has brought it entirely on himself; he has no one to blame but himself. Dear me," he continued, very gravely; "what a mercy—poor fellow! It is a severe lesson. It might have been still worse. Now, Louis, go on with your operations. I will take some breakfast with you, and then I shall go and get an interview, if possible, with the Head, and set this matter right."

"Do not be hard on Frank, Hamilton," said Louis earnestly.

"I shall tell the whole truth. I will not leave the matter half done," replied Hamilton, decidedly. "Of course I shall do Frank no avoidable harm."

Louis proceeded in his preparations, while Hamilton asked where he could find a sheet of paper, and having obtained it, sat writing rapidly at the breakfast-table, even after his cup was filled, and a couple of eggs placed near him by Louis's silent care. He turned round hastily now and then, and absently partook of the refreshment, till at length pushing aside his writing materials with a "That will do," he set to work more seriously to the business before him, and talked of one or two common-place subjects to Louis. At last he rose, and bidding Louis a hasty adieu, left the room, taking with him the paper he had filled.

He paused a moment on the staircase outside, and then ran up to the landing above, where two of the party of the preceding night lived, and after a hasty knock, walked into the nearest room, paper in hand, to the owner, who was lying full length on the sofa reading a novel.

"I have but little time, Mr. Cox," he said, with a slight stiff bow. "My business will excuse my intrusion. I believe you were in Mr. Mortimer's rooms last night?"

"I was," replied the gentleman, who had risen, at first not recognizing Hamilton, whom he knew only by sight.

"Will you do me the favor to look at this paper, and sign it, if you find the declaration correct?"

Cox colored, and taking the paper from Hamilton's hand, glanced over it, and rubbed his hand over his mouth.

"It is to the purport, you see, that Mr. Mortimer was imposed upon; that the time of his watch was altered, and

his door forcibly locked. It is truth, and you cannot as a gentleman refuse to sign it. I have come to you first as the nearest. I shall get the signatures of all."

Cox looked at Hamilton doubtfully, but the calm determined gaze he met, seemed to check some coming remonstrance, and he took the paper to his desk and signed it without a word. And with another stiff bow, Hamilton retired, and proceeded on the same errand to the other rooms.

Forgetting that Frank's room was on the same staircase with Louis's, he made all his other calls first. Mr. Halhed cordially bore witness to Louis's gentlemanly conduct, by declaring he was the only one of the party who behaved like a gentleman. Hamilton wasted no time anywhere. The last visit, before returning to Louis's staircase, was to Ford, whom he found carelessly amusing himself with a chess problem, seated before the fire, with a foot on each hob, whistling the while with apparent indifference to consequences. He removed his feet on Hamilton's entrance, and acknowledging his salutation with one equally distant, asked to what he might attribute the pleasure of a visit from him so early.

"To get you to perform an act of strict justice," said Hamilton. "I must have your signature to this paper, if you please."

An ironical smile passed over Ford's face as he glanced over the declaration.

"Come as special pleader for your friend. Well, suppose I don't choose to put down my name as witness for his good conduct?"

"There is no alternative," said Hamilton, quietly; "unless you resign your claim to the title of gentleman. Your name being omitted will only reflect upon yourself. You can give me the paper, if you do not choose to sign it."

Ford scowled at Hamilton, and deliberately began to read the writing, Hamilton standing by without evincing any of the internal chafing which the intentional tardiness produced in his mind.

"Either your name or the paper," he said at length: "I can wait no longer."

Ford slowly produced a pencil-case from his waistcoat pocket, and after screwing the lead up with equal deliberation, very slowly wrote his name, and still retaining his hold as he handed the paper to Hamilton, said,—

"I presume you are bound for the Head, eh?"

"What then?" said Hamilton coldly.

"Because Royston—stop! do you know who fired the pistol?"

"I do," was Hamilton's laconic reply.

"Then the Head doesn't, that's all. Royston didn't let the name out, and he won't."

He looked very hard at Hamilton, whose stern countenance relaxed in the slightest possible degree, and returned the paper as he added, "A word to the wise."

Hamilton's last errand was to Frank. He had met with a ready compliance from all the others, who generally expressed their sorrow for the scrape into which they had got Louis in common with themselves, and for the manner in which they had returned his kindness.

Frank's breakfast was untouched, nor had he made any attempt to begin it. The breakfast things remained where they had been placed, and the kettle was sending forth huge clouds of steam, unnoticed by its owner, who sat with one elbow on the table, his chin resting on his hand, with his back to the door. He made no attempt to disguise his distress, and Hamilton was almost shocked to see the change

one night's weary vigil had made. His face seemed suddenly to have become sallow, and his eyes, usually so full of fun and fire, were leaden and dull. His haggard appearance and untidy hair, pushed back to the farthest extreme, were so unlike him, and spoke of so much trouble, that Hamilton's stern enthusiasm for Louis yielded to a softer emotion. Frank looked at him at first as if he did not know him, and wishing him good morning, made some remark about the kettle burning, and removing it, asked Hamilton to sit down.

"I have no time, thank you; I want your signature to this, Frank. You behaved very ill to Louis last night, and this is all you can do to repair it. He must not suffer for your want of honor."

"Hamilton, you are too hard."

"I am not, Frank; he relied only on you, and you have betrayed him."

"You cannot say any thing that I do not feel. I can only offer in apology what you would not receive as such. I will do any thing. I mean to clear Louis fully before I go,—as soon as—"

Hamilton looked compassionately on him, but could not comfort him. Frank fetched the inkstand, but his hand trembled so violently when he took the pen, that he could not write his name legibly for a minute or two.

"I don't know whether they can read it; but, Hamilton," he added, "you will believe me now, though I have not been as good as my word. Before God, I did not know that pistol was loaded. I never thought of that."

"I believe you from my heart, Frank. Poor fellow!" replied Hamilton, squeezing his hand; but he gazed steadily and almost sternly into his pale face, till his gaze brought a shade of color there, and Frank replied,—

"I know every thing you say there, Hamilton. If I never thanked God truly before, I have now for that wonderful escape. It was an insult any how, Hamilton, I should not have offered, had I been in my senses, for—he—has been very kind to me. Hamilton, I will NEVER taste another drop of wine while I am in college; but that—it is no use saying about that now. Good-by."

"Come, things may be better than you think," said Hamilton, kindly. "You had better get something to eat; you look knocked up."

Frank shook his head, and Hamilton departed with a promise to call in again when he had finished his errand. What passed in the interview Hamilton readily gained, has not transpired; but in less than an hour he returned to Louis, bearing the welcome news that all was straight so far as himself was concerned; and while he was relating all the interesting particulars, a messenger arrived commanding Louis's attendance in the common room, where a few words released him from his durance, and gently admonished him against bad company, kindly alluding at the same time to his known steadiness and exemplary behavior since coming into residence, and recommending him to persevere in the same course to the end. As he left his room on the way to this interview, Hamilton said, in a low voice,—

"They do not know who fired the pistol."

However, Louis was asked no questions, and left the presence without any obligation of saying more than "Thank you."

But the characters of the rest of the party underwent a more searching ordeal. Gate-books were scrutinized, lecture and chapel lists conned, and notes compared; and here Frank's unremitting regularity and early hours stood him in

good stead; and as his friends generally were not very flagrant offenders, the dons seemed inclined to be lenient. In vain was the name of the principal offender demanded of Mr. Royston; he was inflexible, and spoke so bravely and warmly on the hasty mistake which the youth, whoever he was, was rueing so bitterly at the moment, that all expressed their admiration of the kindness of the feelings of their colleague. It was at last concluded that the gentlemen should be reprimanded and "gated,"* and the matter passed over. Two of them, however, of whom Ford was one, were laid up in remembrance for the next slight offence, as many omissions and commissions were found recorded against them. There was little doubt in the minds of the authorities as to the real offender, when the young men in a body entered the room; but the same glance which revealed all, also told that the punishment was enough. Frank stood motionless, with dull, heavy eyes fixed on his judges, as if he expected nothing, heard nothing, and knew nothing. After a long speech on the gross impropriety of their conduct, the Head concluded with—

"This offence would have been much more severely visited, had not Mr. Royston refused to give up the name of the guilty party, whom we should have expelled, had we discovered him. As it is, considering the regularity and steadiness of nearly all, we are willing to pass over it under certain restrictions. We need not, we hope, recommend that the first use you will make of your liberty will be to make all the amends in your power to Mr. Royston, whom you have so grossly insulted."

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* *I. e.* (for the benefit of the uninitiated) confined to the college after dark.

He knelt on one knee, and covering his face with both hands, sobbed violently. —p. 237.

The restrictions were then named, and with low bows and thanks for the leniency shown, the party withdrew to Mr. Royston's rooms with a sense of relief, and in one or two of gratitude, that can be understood only by those who have been in a similar condition. Ford professed to make light of it, but no one followed his example. Frank remained behind, and as the last entered the room, turned towards the door of his own. He staggered into it, and sat down in a sort of giddy stupor, till he supposed the ceremony was over in the tutor's room. He met his friends coming out quite recovered.

"The scene is over, Digby, but you won't escape it. Royston behaved very well; but he asked where you were. You must go and thank him."

"Do you suppose I need any reminder?" said Frank, as he passed them and entered the room. The good old man had been a little disappointed at not seeing Frank, but when he came in, all was understood.

Frank removed his cap and approached a few steps, but he could not speak; he unclosed his white lips, but no sound came, and a violent fit of shivering came on, which he could hardly repress by the most determined efforts.

Mr. Royston looked and waited.

"Never mind; that will do," he said at last, very gently. "Poor lad, I know you'll never cut the old man's coat again, eh? there, there."

Frank was worn out with intense trouble, fasting, and his sleepless night. He began: "Sir—" and then letting his cap fall, he sank on one knee, and covering his face with both hands, sobbed violently.

"There, there," exclaimed the tutor, removing one of his hands and pressing it fondly. "There, there now, no more

crying; it can't be helped. Boys' frolic:—it was a serious one though," he said, kindly; but his own eyes were filled with a moisture that did him honor, and his hand shook nearly as much as Frank's. "There now, get up. You're overdone. These late hours are sad things. I know you'll be more steady; come and sit down."

Frank raised his head, and with an effort gasped out,—

"I am unworthy of your kindness, sir; I did not know the pistol was loaded. Can you forgive me?"

"Nay, I don't suppose you thought of killing any of the *old boys*," returned Mr. Royston. "I'll tell you what you must do, Frank; you must kneel down this day and thank HIM who turned that weapon aside. You know I don't mean that *human* hand: no, we must look beyond that;" he said, very seriously. "This morning might have brought no relief."

"To a life-long sorrow," murmured Frank.

"And, Frank, you must think seriously before HIM *where* the fault lay; it was not wholly in pointing a pistol."

"No, sir, it was not, indeed," replied Frank, sinking his face on his hands again. "Not wholly indeed," he murmured indistinctly.

Mr. Royston raised him up and made him sit down, and then bustled about to get a glass of wine, which he made him drink, and watched the cessation of the violent shivering and sobs, and made him warm his cold hands.

There had been little said, but Mr. Royston understood it all, and resolutely stopped Frank's efforts to explain his emotions of gratitude and sorrow, both almost too vehement for words. It was nearly an hour before Frank returned to his rooms, when he sported his oak, and long remained in solemn prayer and repentance for the events of the last few hours.

Frank was not weak, nor did impressions easily wear off with him. He adhered strictly to his determination, withstood the jeering and invitations of his acquaintance, and never tasted wine all the remainder of his college career; and it was remarked that, though in the course of time his love of fun resumed its place, he never planned nor engaged in any practical jokes, and his love and attention to the kind old tutor were only equalled by that which Mr. Royston lavished on his truly reformed pupil.

CHAPTER XIX.

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."
"Commit thy works unto Him, and thy thoughts shall be established."

Io triumphe! It was a glorious June day, Oxford swarmed with visitors: beds were not to be had at the principal inns for love or money. All the fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters, to say nothing of cousins and friends, seemed to have crammed themselves into the venerable city, for the grand commemoration of benefactors.

Early in the morning, from every quarter in which a college stood, rushed the eager gownsmen to the small door of the theatre, each one desperate to be first, pushing, jostling, and squeezing each other without mercy, the foremost rank being cruelly pressed against the iron rails, pouring out threat after threat on the policeman in attendance if he did not admit them before the hour. The two nearest the door were Frank Digby and Hamilton, for Louis was the successful can-

didate for the English prize poem, and was to read his production before the assembled multitude. At length, when the noise and imprecations were at their height, the door was suddenly opened, and in rushed the mob. Frank and Hamilton ran for their lives; hundreds were after them, mad with excitement for the front row in the undergraduates' gallery; one false step, and whoever it might be must be trampled to death. Up the narrow staircase they tore, and the three foremost comers attaining the entrance to the gallery at once, were all jammed in the doorway, unable either to retreat or advance. Suddenly the mighty force behind sent them all through with a violent jerk, that threw them forward hardly able to regain their equilibrium; but the race was run, the battle won, and with torn shirt-collars, ragged gowns, missing neckerchiefs, and other mishaps, the whole body tumbled in in like fashion, and amid hooting, yelling, and laughter, our two friends took their places, in the most convenient situation in the front row, congratulating themselves on their success.

Now, though it may to some appear a work of supererogation to enlarge on the scene of action, so well known to thousands in our land, and though we may fairly suppose that when an Oxford guide-book is not attainable, a kind friend may generally be found to supply missing details on these interesting points, yet as our volume is intended for those who have not yet commenced their own life at Oxford, and may be read by many who have no opportunity of enlightenment, we will ask those familiar with the scene to excuse us, and to pass on while we endeavor to bring the interior of the theatre before the eyes of those who know nothing about it, and we will enter for their benefit, with Hamilton and Frank, into the highest gallery, a large roomy light gal-

lery, the only fault of which was that it was not spacious enough for the numbers that lawfully or unlawfully poured into it. Above their heads was a beautiful painted ceiling; but as the gentlemen were well acquainted with its beauties already, it had no attraction for them; the cynosure of every eye being a pulpit, considerably beneath them, but elevated above the heads of all below. There was another gallery underneath, of course only partially visible to the undergraduates, which was filled with ladies in full dress. Immediately in front of the ladies' gallery were elevated seats for the dons. Opposite the entrance into the gallery was the orchestra, from under which the college authorities and visitors, who claimed entrance to the pit or body of the building, entered. There was another pulpit immediately under Frank and Hamilton, facing that already mentioned; but with this they had little interest, as it was not in any way connected with the Newdigate hero.

The ladies were all seated, but the area below was empty; and pending its filling, the noisy occupants of the upper gallery amused themselves in their own way. It was, *par excellence*, their day, when their free opinions of things in general might be expressed without fear of consequences, and a good use they made of it as far as lungs were concerned. The continued repetition of the question, "What do you think of so and so?" applied to various individuals popular or obnoxious, eliciting vehement cheers, hisses, or groans, at times mingled, was varied by "Three cheers for the ladies!" "Three groans for the proctors!" laughter, hooting, and all the other attendants on the ceremony, which would defy the power of pen to describe. At length from under the orchestra came the vice-chancellor, preceded by the bedelles, and followed by the inferior luminaries, who all took their places

in the seats in front of the ladies' gallery. Then followed the bestowal of the honorary degrees on the "most dignified" and "most illustrious" personages, who had previously been deemed worthy of the honor, and as each newly-made doctor passed into his place, the excitement of the upper gallery was emitted in vociferous cheers.

Not to be too tedious, we will pass over the following forms, and the Latin verses, to which, though recited by our friend Charles Clifton, the noisy audience paid little or no attention, having apparently established the principle that Latin is a "bore,"—and make way for the hero of the day, who has been standing back in the right-hand rostrum during the previous recitation. Louis had been summoning up his courage for the last two days, and had concluded about two minutes before his entrance by wondering if he should be able to say a word, when he found himself perched above a mass of heads in constant motion below him, while on his right hand was a galaxy of fashion and beauty, and above, hundreds of eyes all anxious to see him. The magnitude of the place, the glitter and beauty around him, only seemed to bewilder him. The color rushed furiously into his face, and his first impulse was to rush out again; but while the orator was performing his part, his self-possession gradually returned, and by degrees he was able to distinguish his mother amid the sea of ladies; and there were two faces very near him not strange, and by degrees he remembered the likeness to his old friend Salisbury; and though he could not remember names, he was sure two of Fred's sisters were there. Hamilton's friendly face seemed to reassure him, and he recognized more than one of his friends in the upper gallery, though his position at present did not allow him to see any old faces down below. He had grown quite calm, and had almost forgotten he was

to play any part in that vast audience, when his turn came, and he found himself standing, he knew not how, in the front instead of the back of the rostrum. His head swam as the painful idea of making his own voice heard by such an audience rushed over him, and his only thought at first was, "It is utterly impossible! I never can make them hear." This conviction flashed across his mind in an instant, as the tremendous cheer greeted his appearance. His hands grew hot and cold, but as his hesitation was on the point of becoming perceptible and painful, his eyes caught down below the figure of his father and Dr. Wilkinson, and nerving himself by a determined effort, he began. He was surprised to find how distinctly his voice sounded in the stillness with which his commencement was received. Now it was that the early care bestowed on him, in careful reading, and his late practice with Hamilton, shone forth; for though not possessed of a powerful voice, his distinct and careful enunciation let not a word fall, and as he proceeded further in his composition, his diction became more fervid and impassioned, till at one slight pause, when his own heart had beat more warmly, and his eye fired with the glory of his subject, a hearty burst of vehement applause paid a tribute, as much to the beauty of the reading as to the lines; and these were allowed by all competent judges to be of no mediocre order, and far surpassing any which for years had gained the prize.

The poem proceeded through the four great empires, dwelling slightly, but powerfully, on the varied events in each, pointing to the development of that time when the stone, that "Stone of stumbling and rock of offence," but "precious Corner-stone;" that little, rejected, insignificant stone, yet "cut out of the everlasting hills without hands," "neither made nor created," smote the image on its feet, and

bearing all down by its mighty and irresistible force, still waxing larger, larger, "became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Surely it was a theme on which the pious young heart rejoiced to dwell, that glorious time when "the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea;" and Louis's soul was in it, and the earnestness of his utterance and the fervor of his tones seemed to create a kindred warmth in his hearers for the time; and when he concluded, half a minute's silence honored the majesty of his subject, and then cheer after cheer arose as he gracefully bowed and quitted the scene of his glory. And where did he go? His heart was overflowing. He waited for no one, not even his parents. There was something before that; there was One to whom the first vows were to be paid; and regardless of all else, he hurried to his rooms, and shutting the door, rushed into his bedroom.

"This is too much, O my God! This honor for me! I am not worthy of it."

And he raised his hands and tearful eyes, as he sank on his knees, "Oh, that I could praise Thee! Let my life praise Thee! This for *me*, an unprofitable servant! Oh, give me a truly thankful heart."

Then the full tide welled up, and stopped utterance. His father and mother—the joy of giving them that happiness! Could a life of entire devotion repay one tithe of the mercies he had received? for it was not this one alone, but all seemed to rise up before him, and amidst all, that great one, that he was able to be thankful.

It was some time after he had left the theatre, when a party who had been vainly searching everywhere in the vicinity of his Honor for the hero of the day, entered, and among them were his parents, Neville, Hamilton, Frank,

Charles Salisbury, and Dr. Wilkinson. More were behind, but a degree of respect for his parents kept them from pressing into the room.

"Where can he be?" was reiterated in various tones. "Louis, you runagate;" "Mortimer, you defaulter." "Here's his poem: he's in his bedroom."

"Then we will wait," said Mr. Mortimer. "But here he comes."

The noise had aroused him, and he entered the room directly, with a most happy expression and moistened eyes that told of much. There was nothing heard for some time but congratulations and praises. He shook hands with all by turns, receiving their congratulations in silence, for he could not speak. His father looked so proudly on him, his mother was almost as tearfully happy as himself, and Dr. Wilkinson's excitement was nearly equal to Hamilton's.

"I always thought you a bit of a poet, Louis," said Charles Salisbury. "But it seems wonderful to me how you can 'spin such a yarn,' as Fred would say, in verse. However, I think I could almost try, to have the ladies as mad after me as they all are about you."

Louis smiled.

"But the reading, Louis," said Hamilton: "it was, after all, a masterpiece."

"It was," said Dr. Wilkinson. "I felt proud to own you."

"You must not say any more," said Louis; "my head will be turned. I wish I had some wine to offer you; but I never take it myself, and I have none at present."

"Never mind that, my boy," said his father; "I shall do the honors to-day: you are to be my guest."

They all sallied forth to the "Mitre," where dinner was ordered, and there were more old friends—Nevinson, and Miss

and Miss Fanny Salisbury, with an aunt who had chaperoned them; and there were more compliments to be paid, and finally they sat down to dinner; and though Louis was very silent, his friends made amends for his taciturnity, and obliged him to return thanks for having his health drunk before they retired. Louis was obliged to return to his college, but not before a very pleasant, though, perhaps, rather noisier evening than he could have liked, had passed. The Salisburys departed for the "Star" as he left, and as he bid them good-by, Fanny dropped a couple of rosebuds, with which she had been playing.

As Louis picked them up, Charles said,—

"Keep them, Louis; she meant them in honor of you, but was too shy to give them. You will let him have them, Fanny?"

"Certainly, if Mr. Mortimer likes them," replied Fanny, with a merry laugh; "but if he takes my advice, he will throw them in the gutter. Faded rosebuds are not for orators, are they Mr. Mortimer?"

Louis laughed, but he did not throw them away till he reached his rooms, where they both disappeared somewhere, and were afterwards very mysteriously found in his trowsers-pockets when he arrived at the Salisburys (where he spent two or three days before he returned to Dashwood), whence he soon transferred them to a box, in remembrance of the great day of the Newdigate. Mr. Mortimer accompanied Louis to the college, and left him at the gates. Long he remained in silent meditation; his slumbers that night were as light as an infant's.

We know how softening an influence sorrow has upon the heart; and we know, also, that prosperity generally tends to render it more careless, and, unless upheld by the unfailing

grace of the Blessed Spirit, less spiritually minded. Yet there are some kinds of prosperity, some honors, which exercise the same influence as trial. They seem too much to bear,—too much for our desert,—too great a boon for one so ungrateful —when the whole being seems pressed down under that goodness which encompasseth it. It is not that all our mercies are not more than we deserve; our daily mercies need call forth a weight of gratitude; but because they are daily, we seldom notice them, especially, unless the Lord reminds us, as Jacob of old, to build an altar of praise for those blessings we have forgotten. Louis's prosperity was of the softening kind, and he was not unseasonably exalted thereby.

CHAPTER XX.

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" —*Ps.* cvii. 23, 24, 31.

Hail, holy Sabbath! They who love thee, seem to think thy skies should ever be bright and unclouded.

Brightly dawned one Sabbath morning in July, 18—, and far as the eye could reach on the broad circumference of the horizon, unbroken by any object, save the fleecy clouds and the hulls of a few distant vessels, the brightness of the coming sun shed his fair rays, chasing stars and twilight, and gradually displayed his splendor to the eyes of the thoughtful midshipmen who paced the deck of the *Hippolyta,* keeping their morning watch. One of them was a fine tall fellow, with head as erect as if his six feet of length had never

bent to five when he stowed himself away in the middy's berth. An incipient pair of whiskers and a slight moustache told of coming manhood, while the almost infantile sweetness of his beautiful mouth and the clear expression of his blue eyes betokened a youthfulness again contradicted by his broad shoulders and manly voice. He was not always so thoughtful; his roaring hearty voice was generally one of the foremost in mirth and merriment; but the calmness of that morning seemed to have spell-bound him; his lips were firmly closed, and his earnest gaze was fixed on a distant cloud with an intensity that seemed to allow of no other thought. The cloud did not move; others swept past gloriously, grandly; the sun held his course and lighted the dark line into a white streak. The middy's companion at length rallied him on his silence; but he did not hear, and straining his eyes more eagerly for a few seconds, he suddenly lifted his blue cap, and waved it above his head.

"Old England forever!" he exclaimed.

"Land!—where?" asked his companion. "I don't see any thing, Salisbury."

Salisbury waved his cap in the direction of the line, and his friend directed his glass to the point.

"Sure as a gun!" he said; and letting the glass fall to the length of the leathern strap to which it was attached, tossed his cap in the air with a loud "Hurrah!" just as a voice from another part of the ship proclaimed the welcome fact. There having been some little delay in changing the man at the masthead at the morning watch, our midshipman had the happiness of announcing their near arrival first. Oh! how wildly the hearts beat, whether young or old, that morning! The three years' voyage was nearly over,—the fatherland was in sight,—and a prosperous wind was bearing the

gallant frigate towards its shores. We trust there were not a few who felt that a mightier power than man's skill had kept them safe. The nearness of eternity is too often brought immediately before the sailor to be wholly unnoticed.

As the morning wore on, the coast became more visible, and they could see the divisions of many white cliffs, and with glasses discover the tall landmarks the lighthouses, and here and there a tower either of castle or church. At the usual hour all hands were summoned to prayers;—and surely, if ever an attentive congregation kneeled on that deck, or listened to the words of the chaplain, it was on that day, when fluctuating hope and fear made the heart feel there was no help but in the Lord. The clergyman took his text from the hundred and seventh Psalm, from the twenty-third to the end of the thirty-first verse; and while reminding his hearers of the many perils from which the Lord had delivered them, he called on them to "praise the Lord for His goodness." "When the stormy wind arose, and the wonders of the Lord in the deep made all hearts to melt because of trouble, how many of you, my friends, vowed unto the Lord in that trouble! Who," continued he, solemnly,—"who has remembered those vows? Who has paid them to the tender Guardian who 'never slumbered nor slept?' Better that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. I call upon all to magnify the Lord with me. Let us exalt His name together. We called upon Him, and He heard us, and delivered us from all our fears. 'Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness!'"

But he did not here conclude. "How were they to praise the Lord? Not only with the lips, but in the life. By a life entirely devoted to His service. Let them declare among men His praise. Let the life He spared and the gifts He

has bestowed be all used to His glory. Let the talents be put out to interest, that at His coming He may receive His own with usury."

The clergyman dwelt much on this part of his lecture, particularly addressing himself to the young officers; and Frederick Salisbury sat with grave brow and parted lips, thinking how many things he had neglected. The service was over, and now they neared the coast; the few hours had brought them in immediate sight, and they passed on their way so close, that as the afternoon wore on they could see the people passing along to church; and the midshipmen were either in high spirits or silent with great excitement, for each young heart had flown to its own home, and fancied the Sunday occupations of each dear one; and they dared not whisper the shade of apprehension that glided over the mind lest one dear one should be missing.

The tedious time slipped by, and at length the *Hippolyta* anchored at Sheerness; and having obtained leave of absence, Salisbury was not long in finding a passage in one of the packets from thence to London; and after a due transit through the Custom House, he found himself steaming up the Thames at the rate of ten miles an hour, clad in white trowsers and a rough pilot-coat, and retaining no mark of his attachment to Her Majesty's service, save the little blue undress cap, which was perched on his head rather on one side, allowing the light curly hair to display itself in the most becoming manner; and too happy and restless to sit still, he walked rapidly up and down the deck, with his hands shoved into the loose pockets in the front of his coat, humming and smiling most radiantly, with a word for every one in his way,—now stopping to amuse a cross child,—now picking up a fallen basket or handkerchief of some lady passenger,—

anon descanting on the weather with the men, or "blowing up" steamboats to the gentlemen. But wherever his frank handsome face turned, it won sympathy, and seemed to shed a sunny beam. At last he attached himself to a couple of ladies, a mamma and daughter, to whom he had introduced himself by proffering a newspaper he had bought at the landing-place; and furthermore, by the dexterous manner in which he extricated a favorite dog from a perilous situation; and before long he had prevailed upon them to accept his escort for a turn up and down.

"I think I need not ask if you have sisters," said the mamma, smiling.

"Lots of them," said Salisbury, gleefully. "It's hard work, ma'am, for a poor sailor to be banished for four years with no ladies but the Chinese houris."

"You are a large family, then?"

"Twelve of us," replied the gentleman.

"Does your mother expect you home?"

A slight shade passed over his face as he answered,

"I sent them a line two days ago, but there's no one to meet me here. I am afraid it missed its moorings."

"You expected some one to meet you, then?"

"To be sure. Never mind, though; they'll be all the more surprised. Look out!" he cried, catching hold of a man who, disturbed by the motion of the vessel, jolted rather roughly against his charge: "Mind the ladies!"

"Beg pardon," said the man. "Portraits taken, sir? Portraits taken, ma'am? One shilling: only one shilling, black profile, sir."

"I think I will, though: mother or little Fan will like it," he replied.

"I would," said the lady. "Suppose we sit down here, and then we can see the process."

"It is a very ungallant thing of me to let you, ladies, sit down for my fancies," said Salisbury; "it will do when you are tired."

"Oh, but I am very tired," said the young lady, laughing: "I have only been beguiled into walking a little."

Salisbury raised his cap, and immediately found a seat with a back to it for the elder lady, and a less convenient one for the younger and himself; and amid much merriment the profile was taken. It was pronounced very like by the younger lady, and by the elder not handsome enough. Salisbury himself was quite satisfied, and decided that his relations ought to be so too; for it was handsome enough for him.

"Here's your shilling; though I think you might have made a fellow as handsome as he ought to be, while you were about it."

"You could not expect black paper and scissors to express your eyes and complexion, sir," said the man; "that's all it wants."

"Come, that's handsome. I am very like a black swan, as we used to say at school," remarked Salisbury almost to himself, as he looked more steadily at the portrait, and a deeper smile shone out of eyes and mouth, when he caught in it the resemblance to his eldest sister.

It was mid-day when they reached London, and after seeing his new friends safely to a hackney coach, he procured another for himself, and set off for the Paddington station, where the then half-finished railway to Bristol commenced, and reached it just in time to take his place by the next train. We will not dwell upon the incidents of the

next few hours; how wonderfully, as if by magic, his frank simplicity charmed the passengers, and drew the children to him as though they knew instinctively that he had some little ones waiting at home for him; how, in his impatience of the tardiness even of steam, when they neared Farrington, he pushed his feet forward as if his impotent exertions could quicken the moving mass. Oh, sailor! perhaps thoughts of the guardian care that reserved thee and thine for that happy meeting, stole over thee when in the dusky shade of the coming twilight thou nearedst thy beloved home.

The coachman set him down at the turn of the road, near which the house stood, and then, though the high wall with its well-known gate was so near, something deterred him from hurrying up; a kind of dread stole over him; "He had not heard for so long—why had no one met him?" He stood still irresolutely, looking at the dark waving branches, till aroused by the whistling of a passer-by, a laboring man.

"A good evening to you, sir."

"Ahoy, my man," said Salisbury, rousing himself from his trance. "Lend a hand here with this chest up to yon gate."

"To Mr. Salisbury's?" asked the man, turning and seizing a handle of the large chest. "He be heavy, bain't he? He must hold a mort of things. You be come from foreign parts, sir?"

"Ay, a long way—from China. Do you know how Mr. and Mrs. Salisbury are?"

"Nay, I knows naught about 'em, sir; 'cept as they lives at yon house."

Poor Salisbury's heart sank more than when he forced his lips to put the question. He wished the man "good-night," after bestowing a shilling on him, and stood looking doubt-

fully in at the gate. He could see the drawing-room windows where he stood, and the nursery above. The latter were open, and the sound of some little voices issued thence. Presently the sound of a piano, and a well-known song below, broken off in the middle by a hearty laugh, in which many voices joined, reached him. Then his mother's tones, and though he heard no words, he could hold out no longer. Pulling the bell with all his might, he shouted "Ahoy, there! ladies, ahoy!" with that tremendous stentorian effect only belonging to the sailor, but which when once heard can never be forgotten, and when once sent forth with "a will," has a peculiar way of making itself heard. There was a pause.

"A-h-oy, ladies!"

Then a scream of "FRED! FRED!" and boys and girls all rushed out of the low window, and before the servant had arrived, the gate was flung wide open, and Salisbury was amongst them—not one was missing—all, all had been spared to welcome him back: the dearest mother in the world—the kind, fond father—the proud, loving sisters—and the hearty brothers in turn presenting themselves; and little Kate, and the little brother, now no longer a baby, were brought down half-dressed for their share of the embraces.

"How he's grown, mamma! What a brown face he's got now!" cried Ethelred.

"And, mamma, here are the whiskers too at last, but not quite so bushy as you feared; and he really looks a man."

"But I really thought Fred would come back with his blue coat on, mamma; and his sword, mamma, mamma," persisted Marianne a great many times.

"But where's little Fan? and I thought John was at

home, poor fellow," said Salisbury, when after the general embraces he began to distinguish who was away.

"They are out," said Edith. "Your old schoolfellow Louis Mortimer is spending a day or two with us, and they are all gone out together in the garden somewhere."

"Did not you get my letter?"

"No; we had no idea you were coming."

"That's strange. How's John, now?"

"He is quite well, and so kind and thoughtful. Oh, Fred! you will love him more than ever. Here they are," said Edith, as Fanny rushed in and threw herself into her brother's arms, having been informed on her entrance by the eager servant that Mr. Fred was come. John and Louis followed.

"How curious that I should be here on your return!" said Louis, when the first recognition was over; "I am going early to-morrow to Dashwood. Had you been a day later, I should not have seen you.

"Here is your tea, my darling boy," said his joyful mother, as the quick, active servant placed a lamp on the table, and set chairs round, lingering in this arrangement, in order to see as much as possible of Mr. Fred; and then Fred seated himself near his mother, and ate and talked with equal rapidity. But who shall describe the delight with which the mutual recitals were made and received—what a warm reception was given to the black profile and the history of its production, and how Mrs. Salisbury laid claim to it, in spite of the vociferous reminders from her daughters that she had a much better one in water-colors. Fred had not long finished his tea when he rushed into the kitchen, with a long train after him, to pay his respects to the servants he knew; and then calling on his brothers to "bear a hand," insisted upon having his huge chest carried into the drawing-room.

"What have we here?" said his father.

"Heave oh!" was the reply, as the chest landed safely on the floor, and the owner searched for his key.

His mother came up to him and vainly endeavored to persuade him to postpone the unpacking until to-morrow, assuring him he was too tired.

"Tired! it takes more to tire me, my blessed old mother," giving his mother a huge embrace and noisy kiss; and then fetching an armchair for her near the scene of action. None of the young people being at all loth to see the inside of the chest again, the rummaging commenced in earnest, and soon the floor was strewed with its every-day contents, and the tables with the rarities and toys on which the young man had laid out all his spare money. There was a set of carved chessmen for his father, a crape shawl for his mother, some china cups and fans and a couple of ivory card-cases for his sisters, shells he had picked up himself, and some Indian treasures which he had procured as they touched at the great Oriental continent on their way home; and what most warmed his parents' hearts was the knowledge that these gifts were the product of self-denial and constant thoughtfulness; for there had been no overdrawing his account, no exceeding the allowance made to him; and now he was repaid by the smiles and expressions of gratitude, the raptures and admiration, as each new article was displayed.

"And now, mother," said he at last, "here is an Indian muslin dress and lining for you."

"Oh, how beautiful!" exclaimed the sisters in a breath.

"For me, my dear boy? I can't wear white muslin," said his mother, as she spread the delicate fabric on her knee. "An old woman like myself wearing such a dress;—really it is very beautiful! You must make it over to one of the girls."

"You look as young as any of them."

"There, girls, do you hear that?" said Mr. Salisbury.

"Well, do what you like with it, mother," said her son. "I won't make any of the beauties jealous."

"Edith, mamma; Edith," said Fanny, eagerly: "Edith will want a handsome dress soon."

"What do you say, Miss Salisbury?" said her father. "Will it do?"

Edith laughed and colored, and her brother, who was just bringing a few shells to her, stopped before her, and looked very steadily at her.

"Eh?" said he at last. "What's in the wind, Swan's Neck?"

Edith laughed and got behind her father, and Fanny, throwing her arms round his waist and turning her merry face up to him, whispered,—

"The Swan's Neck has found some one to play Earl Godwin to her, Fred."

"Well done, Swan's Neck!" exclaimed Fred, in an ecstasy, and in spite of Fanny's upheld finger he rushed after Edith, and gave her a vehement kiss, declaring that Earl Godwin was a man of taste, and keeping his arm tightly round her till she consented to whisper the name of her intended, which she did not do till he had promised, in a whisper, that he would be quiet about it for the rest of the evening; and her eye glanced shyly in the direction of Louis, who was standing at a little distance looking on with an expression of great interest. However, this piece of information decided the fate of a pair of silver bracelets, and Fred begged his mother forthwith to bestow the dress upon his eldest sister, who, Fanny informed Louis, would now assuredly be the favorite till another was married; and she presently hinted the same,

with a saucy shake of her curls, to her dear Fred. He only stopped her mouth with a kiss, and then brought forward the last article of any great importance in their eyes, which consisted of the hull of a ship, with masts, pulleys, and blocks, ready to be put up; the latter having been cut out of pieces of bone, which he told them he had saved from dinner.

"When that's done that's for you, little Fan, for your museum, my little mother, Fan. She's not grown so much as any of them, mother; she'll always be little Fan."

But it was growing very late, and Mr. Salisbury was obliged to break up the party, and ring for the servants to prayers. Fred thoughtfully seated himself near his father, and drank in every tone of his loved voice. It seemed such a dream to be there again; and when thanks were returned for their happy meeting, there was a pause, and all knew the father felt it almost too much for utterance. They parted for the night, and the deep blessing invoked on his head by his parents told Fred how fully they had been satisfied with his conduct while abroad, and how dearly they prized that constant turning of his affectionate memory to his home; and from how many evils had the remembrance of that home been the instrument of keeping him.

The many "good-nights" were at last concluded, and Fred had just closed his door, when a little tap induced him to reopen it, and Fanny entered. "I could not go to bed without another kiss, Fred," she said.

"Bless you; why you are quite in a tremble."

She threw her arms round him, and he stooped down and looked full into her now pale earnest face.

"Fred, dear Fred," she said, "I am so afraid that you should at all forget God's goodness. Will you try to think of it, my own *dearest* brother? I have been thinking about

those verses, 'I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!' I don't think you have forgotten though," she added, tenderly, stroking his hair from his forehead with both hands, and looking still more deeply into his grave eyes. "Do you remember the text little Marianne found in my text-book the morning you were going away, 'The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him, and the Lord shall cover him all the day long?' You will not be angry with me, I know, because we all want reminding sometimes."

Fred did not speak, but pressed two or three times a long kiss on her forehead, and then with another quiet "Bless you," released her.

Louis Mortimer returned to Dashwood the next morning, after spending two very pleasant days with his friends. The next Sunday thanksgivings were returned at ———Church for the safe return of a member of the congregation from a long voyage; and though the sailor was soon obliged to return to his ship, he was able to obtain leave of absence not long after, to attend the nuptials of his eldest sister, who, arrayed in the India muslin, was united in their parish church to the happy Earl Godwin before alluded to.

CHAPTER XXI.

"And he called his ten servants, and delivered unto them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come."—*Luke* xix. 13.
"The night cometh, when no man can work."—*John* ix. 4.

Time passed. One after another Louis's college friends took their degrees either with or without honors, and entered into life more or less prepared as their endeavors had tended towards their preparation.

The precious time was gone never to be recalled; the large rich opportunities for improvement and culture of the mind had vanished forever; and in after-years, in many cases, to be regretted in vain, for they could *never* be replaced. It is in youth we generally fix our earthly career, *each one for himself.* Surely it is a momentous thought that so much lies in our own power; and though we may feel that the child of God will find work in any and every station, yet we shall hold that man guiltless who has not striven to raise himself as far as the talents given him allowed? How many a one, newly awakened in after-life to a sense of his duties to God and man, has mourned in vain wasted youth and opportunities for enlargement of his powers of usefulness never to return, but which, rightly improved, would have opened to him a wide field for glorifying Him who called him into the light of His Gospel. Whether we have one talent or five, we are called upon to double them; and God is not a hard master; whatever we are commanded, we may

be sure we have power to perform. Work, then, in the day-time of youth,—work in His strength. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might."

Ferrers took a double first, and retired, soon after taking his degree, to Bath, where he was very successful in obtaining pupils. He did not take orders for some years after; when the gradual working of that small seed—at what time planted we cannot say, but it would seem either in the time of his disgrace at school, or in his subsequent trouble—had arrived at mature development, and he felt he could answer "I trust so" to the solemn query in the ordination service. Shortly after taking his degree, he gained a fellowship attached to his college, and the last heard of him was, that he was usefully and actively employed in an extensive parish, earnest in every thing that could by any means extend the knowledge of the love of Christ, devoting every energy and improved talent to his Master's service, and deeming all but dross, so that he might win Christ, and be found in Him. He was not spoken of as a brilliant, fascinating, or powerful preacher; but all members have not the same office; and the clergyman who visits his flock with the love of Christ in his own heart, bearing quietly and individually the message of salvation to each, and carefully stemming every inroad of the enemy in the hearts of his charge, speaking by a life of holiness constantly to them, is surely no less useful than he who by the power of his eloquence and his gift in exhortation can fill his church till there is hardly standing-room. At any rate, we generally see that it is the clergyman's life at which his flock looks;—it is the holiness of his life that speaks the most loudly to those who "seek for knowledge at his lips," and he whose life and conversation most nearly resemble his great Master's;—he it is who will be considered

the "messenger of the Lord of Hosts." "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Frank took a first class in mathematics, and a second in classics. He was intended for the ministry of the Church; but having a proper dread of taking upon him so solemn an office lightly, he persuaded his father to change his destination, and got a situation of some kind in the House of Lords. And now we come to our hero, whose name, in spite of his tutor's earnest endeavors and his own steady conduct, only came out in the third-class list,—whether owing to accident, or nervousness, or to the desultory nature of his own arrangement of his studies, or to want of sufficient ability, or all together, we do not pretend so say. Some said he had not application enough, and that if Hamilton had not made him work, he would not have done even as much as was accomplished. Certain it was he was not idle, and earnestly strove to do his duty; but perhaps his efforts flagged just where they would have been of such signal service to him in his examination; and though possessing a considerable amount of scholarship, he was too deficient in critical accuracy and the hundred minutiæ so essential to a first-class man, and which were attained by many his inferiors in mind, though not in perseverance. Hamilton went up to London about the time that Louis returned home strengthened in mind, and untainted by the follies with which he was in a measure surrounded. And what had preserved him? We need not say, so far in our history. It was that "asbestos robe"—to use the words of a sweet writer of our day—of vital union with our living Head, —that constant and daily communion with Him who walketh through the fires with His faithful servants. The solemn important day so long looked forward to had passed; Louis's

day-dream was fulfilled; and it was with a full heart that he left the Priory, the Sunday after his ordination at Norwich, to preach his first sermon in the church in which he had been dedicated to God,—which his infant steps had first trodden,—amidst the well-known faces and warm hearts all willing to think favorably of what should proceed from his lips. The church was very full, for some strangers from a neighboring village belonging to Mr. Mortimer were there to hear the young Squire's first sermon; and there was the rector's own pew full,—his happy mother, eager Mary, with her flushed face and sparkling eyes turned often to the reading-desk and the communion-table, where her brother was first to appear. Reginald, now a cavalry officer, and Neville, from Cambridge, where he was studying physic by his own wish, were there, and his devoted old grandmother, who had undertaken the long journey to be present at her darling's first sermon. Lady Vernon sat comfortably cushioned in a roomy corner of the pew, listening to his gentle voice with that calm earnest attention which seemed to belong only to one near the end of life's long journey. "Was it true, indeed! Had his God been so gracious to him that he should have the desire of his heart! Oh, God! my God, how bountiful thou art! Thou hast led me hitherto. Thine is the glory," were his grateful breathings, as he slowly ascended the pulpit stairs; but when he met the many well-known faces, all bearing the same earnest and gratified expression, it almost overcame him; he needed the few minutes' communion with his God. He chose for his prayer the collect for the first Sunday after the Epiphany, and his text was from the first Epistle to the Corinthians, third chapter, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth verses. The sermon was very earnest and faithful, delivered very quietly, and rather timidly. He

concluded it, at length, in the words of the apostle, "Finally, brethren, pray for us." Lady Vernon folded her hands; her eyes were dimmed, as she breathed an earnest petition for him, and the congregation dispersed to talk quietly in their homes of the beautiful sermon "Mr. Louis had made," and to wonder how "such a young man should have such a gift." Louis and his father left the church almost immediately after the rest of their party. As Louis left the vestry, an aged man, who was standing near, leaning with both hands on a stick, apparently waiting for him, respectfully bowed; and on Louis extending his hand, with his customary sweetness and respect, to the hoary head, he seized it, and looking earnestly in the young face with eyes full of tears, said,—

"'The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make His face to shine upon thee.' Sir, I saw you a babe at that font, I've watched you all a growing up, and I bless God for it. Will you forgive an old man's liberty?"

"You are only too kind, Robins," replied Louis. "I am grateful for your affection."

"Sir, as long as it pleases the Almighty to spare me, may He forbid that I should sin in ceasing to pray for you, that He may keep you from all snares. Oh, sir, keep close to the Bible, as you have done to-day: but there are spirits of Antichrist abroad, sir: may the Lord keep you from them."

"Ay, Robins," rejoined Mr. Mortimer, "he must beware lest any one spoil him through philosophy and vain deceit. God grant it."

The old man looked still intently in Louis's face, and added, with affectionate solemnity,—

"Concerning the works of men, by the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer."

And on Louis extending his hand, he seized it —p. 264.

He released Louis's hand with another fervent blessing, and slowly followed the father and son from the church. Louis watched his cautious exit from the church door, when unfastening the park gate.

"His grandson is not with him, father; he can hardly get on."

He retraced his steps immediately, and insisted upon supporting the old man's tottering steps to the end of the churchyard, where they found the missing grandson, to whose care he consigned him, and rejoined his father.

CHAPTER XXII.

"Now we see through a glass darkly."—1 *Cor.* xiii. 12.
"What thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter."—*John* xiii. 7.

Some writer beautifully remarks, that "as in a long journey, each turn of the road presents the traveller with a fresh view, so in the Christian's life, new experiences are ever opening before him; yet he is not the less safe. The same hand leads him, the same wisdom guides him.

Some of these experiences are very painful, and perhaps none more so than those which wake us from a dream of child-like security and peace to a knowledge of differences in doctrine, of misunderstanding and bitterness of feeling among those who, in truth, have their feet equally firm on the Rock of Ages, and yet frown because each cannot direct his brother's eyes to the exact point of the horizon on which he

is gazing. Alas! Christian, will you not remember that that slanting gleam of sunlight that makes the ripple glitter before your eyes, exhibits, in rainbow tints, a more distant object to your differently situated fellow-creature? Are we not commanded to "think soberly, according as God hath given to every man the measure of faith?" "The same Spirit ministereth severally to every man as He will." Surely we need constantly to recall that deep reminder, "Who is it that hath made thee to differ from another?"

There are certainly fundamental doctrines on which no true Christian can differ. The doctrine of the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity; the full, perfect satisfaction of the sacrifice of the blood of Christ, and the impossibility of being saved out of Him; the entire ruin of man at the fall, and the certainty of a future state of happiness or misery. There can be *no mistake* about these; and of these I do not speak now, but of those abstruse and mysterious difficulties, those divisions and subdivisions of difference, which seem to constitute the whole religion of some people, and with which they not unfrequently distress and perplex the tender mind of a child in Christ, drawing him away from his loving trust in his mighty and tender Saviour, from those sweet hopes and practical duties which should constantly engage his soul, giving him instead a meager substitute of logical distinctions and subtle definitions.

Were it not that the Christian knows that "all things shall work together for his good," he cannot sometimes understand why his simple trust in the love of Christ should be disturbed by these conflicting opinions, why he could not be left in practical ignorance of the schisms and differences in the church of Christ. And this distraction sometimes comes upon him when his conscience acquits him of having led himself

into temptation; and tossed about with doubts, he exclaims, "Where is my Maker, who used to give me songs in the night?" "Why is this come upon me? my way seems no longer enlarged under my feet; it is hedged up with thorns. Why cannot I go into the house of my God, and listen to His preached word, without involuntarily cavilling at the chance expression, without the sinful eagerness to detect the shade of a wrong doctrine? Yet we need not fear,—the true disciple of Christ shall not be left in darkness. He may not see the slothfulness that crept upon him; he knew not the tendency that threatened to make him lukewarm in the service of God. He would not have known, perhaps, if he had not experienced the distress of controversy in his own mind, how he would act towards others; but God knew all; and now he will more carefully remember how the Apostle Paul became all things to all men, if by any means he might save some. Perhaps he will never see the reason of his dark seasons, yet by-and-by the covering shall be removed that is cast over all people, and he will see that that very dark and narrow pathway between the hedges of thorns was the only safe way for him.

Two quick years had Louis spent in his pastoral duties at Dashwood—years of quiet happiness, unruffled, save by that shade which will sometimes steal over the heart in times of prosperity, a fear of coming evil, when the sudden death of Lady Vernon, who was paying a second visit to Dashwood, cast a gloom over all. Louis was her favorite grandchild, and his affectionate heart had always warmly returned her love. We are apt to think, in cases indifferent to ourselves, that the death of an aged person, coming in the course of nature, is a slight trial; but to those concerned, who can express the strange blank, the wondering remembrance that

the loved one who has filled his or her place from our earliest recollections, shall fill it no more?

The shock of the sudden loss, united with his great sorrow and the extreme quietude of his life, after a few weeks told upon Louis's health; and change of scene and more activity of life were prescribed for him. Mrs. Mortimer had been rather anxious for some time previously, that Louis should be more actively engaged; there was not enough for three clergymen in their quiet, well-ordered cure, and she had noticed an indolence of mind and manner, which she dreaded, creeping over Louis. He was himself unconscious of it, but there had been in the state of his mind something a little akin to that spirit which says, "I am rich and have need of nothing," because nothing had occurred to remind him of his danger.

It was about this time the family party were at breakfast one morning, when the post-bag was brought in, and Mr. Mortimer, unlocking it, proceeded to distribute its contents.

"Miss Mortimer, three for Miss Mortimer," he said, handing her letters to Mary. "Reginald Mortimer, Esq. We must not forget to forward that. Here is one for mamma, and one for Doctor Mortimer. There, Neville, the first letter addressed to the doctor—from Cambridge, I perceive."

Neville laughed, and opened it.

"Four for Louis, I declare, and none for me."

"Nor for me," said Freddy. "I declare, it's a great shame of Mr. Hamilton not to answer my long letter."

"This is for you, father," said Louis, returning one of his; "and there, Master Fred; Hamilton only gives me a scrap, and you the lion's share."

"Oh! what a capital scribe he is, after all!" exclaimed Fred. "One always gets something for grumbling. If ever

I get impatient about looking for a thing and grumble, I am sure to find it."

Mr. Mortimer shook his head.

"That is a dangerous theory, Fred."

"Well, I don't think I am likely to become a misanthrope yet," answered Fred, with a blush. "Now for a dive! What a long epistle! I must take some coffee to sustain me the while."

"Commence, by all means," said Neville, "and then, perhaps, we shall comprehend our own."

There was something in Louis's correspondence that seemed to excite him a little, for he looked up once or twice with a heightened color, but refrained from speaking, as the others were engaged. At length, all but Mary having finished, he began.

"I could not think what Hamilton meant by, *I hope you will not go* to Trevannion, but all my letters are on the same subject. One is from Trevannion to ask me to take his parish for six months with Nevinson, who, you know, is his curate, and Nevinson writes so anxiously that I should come. Read them, will you?"

Louis handed the letters to his father.

"Trevannion! Where is he? Oh, I remember. Is he not a little *high?* I wonder he should think of you. Hamilton thinks you had better not go, does he?"

"Yes, he croaks sadly about Trevannion's principles," said Louis.

"But his judgment is always so correct," remarked Mary, laying down her letter. "Don't you think so, Louis?"

"Generally," replied Louis, smiling. "Only I do not know how Trevannion's principles can affect me, when he is in Italy."

"Oh! he is going away, is he?" said Neville. "That alters the case materially. Is Nevinson a sound man?"

"How can you ask?" said Louis. "Besides, surely I am as capable of guiding myself as Nevinson is of guiding me. I see you have as poor an opinion of my firmness as Hamilton."

"I was not thinking of your danger just then," replied Neville, "more than my own in a similar case. I am always afraid of *going* into temptation; but, of course, if you feel yourself *led*, then you are safe."

Mrs. Mortimer asked to see the letters.

"Trevannion is obliged to leave in a fortnight, and has very little time to look out for any one," said Louis, as his mother took one of the letters.

"Well, Louis," said his father; "your friends seem both very anxious to have you. I suppose your answer must be speedy."

"Do you see any objection, father?"

"Not at present," said Mr. Mortimer, "if you can live out of the town. Mr. Trevannion talks of his home being at your service; we must make some inquiries about its situation, and so on. I can see no other objection; but on the contrary it seems rather desirable, especially as a little harder work will be of service to you."

"And, papa, Louis really may do a great deal of good there," said Freddy, "if Mr. Trevannion's so terribly high church."

"True," said Mary; "he might. Do not you think so, papa?"

"I hope so," said Mr. Mortimer, gravely. "He must not forget who gives the increase. An old friend of mine lives there,—Mr. Wells; you have heard of him. I shall write a

line by to-day's post, and inquire about the situation of the Rectory, and you, I suppose, will write to your friends, if you feel you wish to accept the proposition."

"I should like to go, father, as I must go from home. It would do me good to be with Nevinson, and then, if Mr. Wells is near, that will, I am sure, be an inducement. By the by, is he in the church, father?"

"No," replied Mr. Mortimer; "but he will be as valuable an adviser out of it, Louis. He is many years older than myself, and I have often profited by his advice in bygone times, though it is many a year since I saw him."

"I hope he may be a friend for me," said Louis.

"I wish we could have longer to think about it," said Mrs. Mortimer. "Cannot you write to-morrow, Louis?"

"Indeed, dear mother, he wants an immediate answer. He has so short a time to find a substitute; you will see he is going abroad with his uncle, who has been a father to him."

"Well, then, we must trust it will be for the best," said Mrs. Mortimer cheerfully, as she rose from the table.

The young people followed her example, and stood round the fire talking of the proposed separation, till a servant came to remove the breakfast things, when Neville seized a book and sat down to read; Mary produced some work, and Louis went off to the Rectory to consult about some parish matter with Mr. Phillips, and likewise to unfold his new plans. He received the warmest sympathy from his old tutor, with some reflections on the benefit his ministry would be to Trevannion's benighted flock, which went the more to Louis's heart, that encomiums were rare from Mr. Phillips.

What mortal mind in its own strength could escape scathless the many well-meant but injudicious comments which

reached Louis's ears from all quarters on the benefit of his ministry? Alas! the warm grateful hearts of the benefited of a beloved pastor forget too often his mortality; and none need more the prayers of his congregation than the idolized and successful preacher of a crowded church. It needs great grace and great experience to watch against all self-reliance, and to cast daily and hourly the *whole glory* at the Saviour's feet; and surely the young, placed in a position in which they are often looked up to for advice, by their superiors in every thing but that office, need to hang momentarily upon Him who is able to make them to stand.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"—1 *Cor.* iii. 3.

About a fortnight after the arrival of Trevannion's letter, Louis was on his way to his new duties. Trevannion's parish was a thickly-populated district, on the borders of a large town in ——shire. The church was newly built, and endowed by Trevannion's father when the present incumbent was but a boy, on condition that the first presentation should be reserved for him.

As Louis drew near his journey's end, the book that had occupied him intensely for an hour previously was laid aside, and every way-mark carefully scrutinized. His fellow passengers came in for a share of the scrutiny. Two middle-aged ladies and a little boy occupied the opposite side of the

railway-carriage, and on his own side was a benevolent-looking white-haired man, whose gentlemanly contour and apparent absorption in his pamphlet had, at first, rather more interest for our hero than the more ordinary trio opposite. He had, however, made but a slight mental speculation on the probable characters and destinies of his companions, when his attention was suddenly directed to the ladies' corner by the mention of Nevinson's name.

"Will Mr. Nevinson take all the duty now?" asked one lady.

"I really don't know. If he has strength, I suppose he will; but it is a heavy duty for one," replied the other.

"You have never been in his church?" asked the first speaker.

"Dear, no," replied the other: "I would far rather go to a dissenting chapel than enter one of those Puseyite places."

"Well, really," rejoined her friend, "I see no harm in going to morning prayers there: they cannot alter them, and they are beautifully done; and *such* singing! I always went to afternoon prayers there, when I was staying with the Prices."

"What a shame, to be sure, that that large district should have been promised to that boy, before any one could know what he would turn out!"

"It is: now, if Mr. Strangeways had it—"

"Have you heard Mr. Strangeways?"

"Often; and he is a wonderful preacher; and so young, too; not above thirty, I believe."

"Mr. Nevinson is quite a young man, if I recollect right," said the other.

"Yes, and some of the people seem to like him; at any rate, I suppose he's better than Mr. Trevannion. But it is

strange how beguiling the manners of that party generally are."

"Well, I remember," rejoined her friend, "that the poor spoke very well of Mr. Nevinson. I cannot help hoping well of him. I met him once out, and certainly was charmed with the sweetness and piety of his manners. Can such a man be really far wrong? His life is a living epistle."

The old gentleman here lifted his head, and spoke earnestly,—

"I am afraid we must not trust it, ma'am, where it is connected with so much soul-destroying error. Even Satan can transform himself into an angel of light."

The lady who favored Nevinson looked rather distrustfully at the speaker. She compressed her lips for a minute, and then turning to her friend, who appeared to be on friendly terms with him, from the ready smile with which she received his speech, and the apparent answer she was about to make, continued, without giving her time to speak,—

"My idea of Mr. Nevinson was a good deal confirmed by a short conversation I once overheard. I was caught in a shower of rain, without an umbrella, one day during my last visit, and stood under an archway in Porter-street, where one or two people were standing. A little merry-looking old woman, with a basket, was very close to me, and had apparently just recognized an old friend, with whom she was holding an animated conversation, as I found, on the subject of church-going. 'Well,' said her friend, 'I never seed you at church last Sunday.' 'No,' said the basket-woman; 'the thing is, you see, I went and heerd Mr. Nevison.' 'Law, and did 'e though? But isn't that un a Pusey, Mrs. Groves?' 'Oh, well, some folks call him a Pusey; but that's naught to me. He's a good man, and not a bit of pride in him; if Mr.

Nevison is Pusey, all I can say is, I wish all the world was Puseys. He's got heaven in his face and in his talk, and a'most wears hisself out for poor folks.' "

"I am afraid you are half *Pusey* yourself," said the other, laughing. "Do you know Mr. Nevinson, Mr. Wells?" she asked of the old gentleman. "I believe not."

Louis turned quickly round, and met the old man's eyes fixed on him. He colored, and looked again out of the window. Mr. Wells replied that he did not, "but that the sooner such men as he and Mr. Trevannion went to Rome, the better; their insinuating manners only making them more dangerous."

"Do you know who is to supply Mr. Trevannion's place for the next six months?" inquired the lady.

"A Mr. Mortimer, from Norfolk," replied the gentleman.

"St. Margaret gets all the fine names," said the other lady, laughing.

"Do you know if he is a true man, Mr. Wells?"

"I am afraid, my dear madam," replied the gentleman, politely; "you can't expect much from Mr. Trevannion. Mr. Mortimer is a very young man; but I trust he may be right and true. He comes from a good stock, though reared in that hot-bed of Arminianism, Oxford."

"It will be a blessing to the parish, if he prove efficient," replied the lady.

The old gentleman did not seem inclined to continue the conversation. He had again fastened his eyes on his pamphlet, and was quietly ensnaring the child to his side by some talismanic signals with his fingers, and a paper of barley-sugar which appeared very mysteriously from some pocket. The child very soon changed his place, and Louis was beginning to warm a little to the lover of children, when at

this moment the train arrived at the station, and being near the door, Louis jumped out, politely waiting to assist the ladies. Mr. Wells came last, and to him our hero left the office of assisting them further; and proceeding to the luggage-van, he at length discovered, among the trunks and portmanteaus mercilessly flung on the platform, his own share of its contents. He had, furthermore, just made the discovery, that Mr. Wells' acquaintance was a Mrs. Wybrow, from the labelling of some huge trunks claimed by her, when a gentleman rapidly approached, and almost before he could recognize him, exclaimed,—

"Mortimer! how are you? I was very nearly too late."

"Nevinson! This is kind, to meet me here in this strange land," replied Louis, warmly returning his hearty grasp of the hand.

"I have a fly outside; we will not waste any more time; I am longing to get you home."

His luggage was quickly carried off by the flyman who accompanied Nevinson, and forgetting at once all his curiosity about Mr. Wells, Louis followed; not, however, before he had heard Mrs. Wybrow remark to her friend, "I declare that's the new curate. They seem great friends."

Louis followed his friend with a heightened color and a smile on his face down the staircase that led to the road. At the bottom their way was obstructed by people clamorous for conveyances; and while waiting here for a fly to drive up, Mr. Wells briskly descended the stairs, and advanced to Louis—

"Ah! and so you are Mr. Mortimer himself!" he said, holding out his hand. "I hope you have left you father well. I am glad to see you here, none the less that you have heard yourself talked of," he added, with a smile. "Now,

tell me how you left your father. I wanted you to come to me. Ah, I see," he continued, "your friend is impatient. I won't detain you. God willing, I shall call on you on Monday; and you must consider Ivylands as your home; come in and go out when you like. Vicarage, eh?"

Louis, supposing the last query to refer to his place of abode, hastily answered in the affirmative, and with a warm grasp of the hand the old man released him.

"I told Trevannion you would spend a few days with me," said Nevinson, when they were alone in the fly; "and you must not refuse, for we have a bed, and so much to tell you. You have not seen Ella yet; and in fact every thing is new, and I know interesting."

Nevinson was so hearty and happy, that Louis felt his fatigues almost over. He made many inquiries about his friend's home, and one or two about Mr. Wells. Nevinson pointed out a large mansion in the distance as Ivylands, and answered all his queries fully; but there was a little constraint visible in his manner of speaking of Mr. Wells, for which Louis was not at much loss to account, after the conversation he had overheard; and he was a little struck with the gentle, kind tone in which Nevinson told him that Mr. Wells was a good man and very earnest, never even inferring by any expression that a difference of opinion existed between them. Louis, however, noticed the searching and almost sorrowful expression of his large dark eyes as he concluded, and immediately changed the subject. At last the fly stopped at a pretty cottage, scarcely out of the town. It was too dusk to distinguish details, but Louis saw there was a little garden, and walked on a gravel path round a small lawn to the house door, which was wide open, and beyond on one side of the hall an inner door likewise, whence glowed the firelight

very invitingly. Nevinson rapidly led his friend through the latter into a comfortable room, something between a library and a drawing-room, where a blazing fire and a warm welcome awaited him. Mrs. Nevinson, a lady-like young woman, stood near the door to greet her husband's friend, and performed her part with a grace and friendliness that made the visitor at once at home.

"Ella knows you very well, Mortimer," said Nevinson; "she has been quite looking forward to this meeting, and you have often heard of her."

"We are mutually gratified, I am sure," said the lady. "You must be cold, Mr. Mortimer; travelling is always very cold. I have ordered a fire in your room. I hope Henry has persuaded you to remain with us till Mr. Trevannion's departure."

"You are very kind, indeed," replied Louis; "it will be a very great pleasure to me."

"After so long a separation, you must both have so much to say; those numberless little things that never can be told in a letter. We are both very glad you have consented to take Mr. Trevannion's duty; it was so exactly what Henry wished."

After a little more talk, Nevinson led the way to the neat little bedroom that had been prepared for his reception. Here was an easy chair turned towards the fire, and near it a little table with inkstand, portfolio, and paper, and a small kettle of boiling water was on the fire. Every thing seemed to be most carefully and kindly arranged for his comfort.

"Our accommodations are very small," said Nevinson, as he placed the candle on the dressing-table; "but you know, a little where love is—"

"How kindly you have been thinking of me!" said Louis,

gratefully. "I did not expect such a welcome at my journey's end."

"What did you expect, then?" replied Nevinson, happily. "Do you see any thing down-stairs of the old rooms at college, Mortimer?"

"Your favorite color," replied Louis; "that comfortable red."

"Ella and I, you know, are obliged to study economy; we are not overflowing with riches, and I need not say to you how much a clergyman has to do with his superfluous money; so when we furnished, we got those plain substantial articles which would wear and look most comfortable at the least cost; and I knew of old how well my old curtains and carpets wore, and how snug that old room looked to the last. I think I need not ask you how you like my Ella."

"No," answered Louis; "there can be but one opinion."

"It is too soon to judge," said Nevinson. "I am too impatient; but I will defy your closet criticism. 'The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, and her price is far above rubies.' But I will leave you now; dinner will soon be ready. We have a late one to-day in honor of you. I have another treasure to show yet."

Louis was soon ready; and when he left his room, he found his host within earshot, for he met him directly, and led him to a room on the opposite side of the landing. Here every thing betokened a nursery;—a small tent bed in the corner of the room, a cradle in another corner, and a respectable-looking young woman working at a little frock near the table, all scrupulously neat.

Nevinson led the way quickly, but very softly, to the bed. On the outside, covered over with a woollen shawl, his little rosy face resting on a dimpled hand, his long dark lash con-

trasting beautifully against his fair cheek, lay a cherub baby fast asleep, as if he had been tired out with play.

Nevinson held the candle above him, and looked down with unutterable love, as if he had forgotten he had brought in an admirer.

"Oh, what a treasure!—what a lovely child!" exclaimed Louis. "You may be proud of that beauty, Nevinson. Do not you feel very proud of him?"

"I dare not feel *proud*," said Nevinson, very sweetly. "He is a gift that cometh from the Lord. I can only feel my Heavenly Father is too good to me. My own one," he added, as the babe, roused by the voices, lifted his eyelids, and turned his round, full, dark eyes on the stranger wonderingly. "Take the candle, nurse."

Nurse relieved her master, and meeting the outstretched arms of his first-born, he lifted him from the bed.

"This wasn't your sleepy time, my boy. Was he tired with play? What, a loving kiss for papa?" he added, as the beauteous child threw his little fat arms round his father, and with open lips pressed a kiss on his cheek.

Louis stood an admiring spectator, when the child's attention was attracted by another sight behind his father, and his arms were once more extended with an eager cry, while his whole countenance lighted up with excitement and animation, as his mother drew near him, the flush of recent sleep adding such a radiancy of loveliness as a painter would have delighted in. Mrs. Nevinson looked at Louis for admiration, and was quite satisfied with the wrapt smile she saw, and as if transported, she seized the little naked foot that had lost its shoe, and kissed it over and over again; then taking the child from her husband, she laughed with it from very happiness. Dinner was announced, and with a fond kiss the

precious one was delivered to his nurse, and Louis led Mrs. Nevinson to her little dining-room. The evening was spent very happily. They were lively and unreserved; but that which delighted Louis most was the deep, unaffected, cheerful piety that breathed in all his friends said or did, and the beautiful spirit of charity which characterized all their mention of those of whom they spoke, even though, in many cases, they might differ widely in sentiment. It was natural and necessary that Louis should hear much of persons on his arrival in a strange place, where he was to be so much connected with the same; but Nevinson always seemed to know the good, and never to see the evil.

As Louis bid his hosts good-night, after the little hallowed worship of the evening, he thought much of that word which says, "Charity thinketh no evil, vaunteth not herself, seeketh not her own, believeth all things, hopeth all things."

The next day was Sunday, and early in the morning a gentle tinkling of the many bells in various parts of the town awakened our hero. Though it was not daylight, he rose and dressed, and remained in his rooms till he supposed it might be near breakfast-time. He found his friend taking off his great-coat in the hall, while through the open door of the adjacent sitting-room, he saw that Mrs. Nevinson's breakfast preparations seemed in a state of readiness.

"Have you been out already?" asked Louis, when the first greetings were over.

"We have early prayers at seven on Sundays," replied Nevinson, "and at eight o'clock every other day."

"Why did you not tell me so last night? I should have helped you."

"Not after your long journey," said Nevinson, leading him in to breakfast; "you will soon begin in good earnest."

At a quarter past nine Louis set out with his host and hostess. He was to meet his rector in the vestry, and both his friends were bound for the Sunday-school.

"We shall meet at church," said Louis, as they parted near the church.

"You will meet me," said Nevinson. "Ella always allows nurse to go in the morning, and stays at home with baby. We have three services, besides early prayers."

Louis was left alone at the door of the church, almost without understanding that he had arrived there, so intently had he been conversing with his friend, and therefore, being close to the building, was not fully aware of the extreme beauty of its outward proportions, but that of the interior almost startled him.

The church had been built only a few years, and was radiant with new stonework of a first-rate description. No expense had been spared to render it, as far as man's hands could render it, a fitting temple for the worship of the triune Jehovah. Over the inner door of the porch, into which Louis entered, in red and black letters was the text, "This is the house of God; this is none other than the gate of heaven." And as he passed through the beautifully wrought bronze gates that formed this second portal, an unbroken line of clustering pillars and graceful arches of the Decorated style, charmed his eye. The groined roof and rich windows, with their flowing tracery and colored glass, the illuminated texts here and there, where they could be placed without damage to the uniformity of the edifice, all added in forming one whole, that charmed his senses and impressed him with a sense of deep solemnity.

A pew-opener, who was sitting near the door, rose on Louis's entrance, and on his inquiring for Trevannion, led

him up the south aisle to the further end, where, matching a screen which concealed the organ in the north aisle, was the vestry. She knocked at the door, and on the answering, "Come in," opened it and left Louis to himself. He now found himself in a comfortable little room, very like other vestries, lighted by a circular window, on which was painted a cross surmounted by a crown, and over the mantelpiece was a large framed engraving of Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper." There were one or two richly-carved oak chairs with crimson seats, and on one of these, near the fire, with a table at one side, sat Trevannion, leaning pen in hand in a graceful attitude at a manuscript,—a Bible and Concordance lay beside. He raised his head as the door opened, and then advancing a few steps he welcomed Louis with an extreme courtesy and refinement of manner, that set him at once perfectly at his ease, and yet expressed as little as was consistent with their former degree of friendship. Louis was accommodated with a chair on the opposite side of the fire, and after all proper inquiries about his health and journey, Trevannion easily diverged into his satisfaction at seeing Louis, and his plans and wishes during his absence; and Louis at length gathered from his discourse, that he was particularly anxious to have the service very carefully done, especially the singing, and that he was exceedingly rejoiced to get a *gentleman* to fill his place.

"I am desirous not to disgust the people, Mr. Mortimer. We have had a very thin congregation, owing, I imagine, to the very uncomfortable way in which the church was pewed. I have been at considerable expense to remedy this defect, and as you see, have had open benches to replace the old pews, and have also at length obtained, I believe, a good organist; but not being a musician, I have not been able to

superintend this part of the service at all. I expect," he added, with a smile, "that you will have all that in splendid training when I return."

As he spoke he rose, and throwing open the door, led Louis once more into the church towards the communion-table. A beautiful oak screen separated the chancel from the body of the church. Trevannion opened a gate in one of the side screens, and led Louis within this spot, which seemed to be considered so sacred. On either side were stalls for the choristers, and raised four steps was an altar-piece, surrounded with a carved oak railing. The table of carved stone bore two massive silver candlesticks, each with its lighted taper; and on each side of it were two splendid chairs. Behind the table rose the stone work, on which were illumined the Ten Commandments, the Belief, and Lord's Prayer, in four arches; and still higher, partially shaded by a crimson curtain, a gorgeous window, portraying the Last Supper: above were the words, "*Hoc est corpus meum.*" Louis was almost struck dumb for a minute; he looked gravely at the show. He had never been within a Romish chapel, but he fancied it must look something like this.

"It is very beautiful," he said at last. "Do you have cathedral service here?"

"I wish it much," replied Trevannion; "but neither Nevinson nor I can intone. You will be able."

Louis shook his head.

"Nay, but I know you can, and I am sure you have too much desire to do all honor to the worship of the Almighty not to attempt it."

The solemn reverential manner in which Trevannion spoke, made Louis look at him. His large dark eyes seemed lighted with a fire of enthusiasm.

"You need not attempt just at present," he added, gently. "We can talk to-night more about these arrangements. I am sure we shall all work together; the church needs unity, Mr. Mortimer. There are too many distractions and schisms already within her."

There was a little pause; Louis felt there was much of which he disapproved; but as nothing very objectionable had been started, he could not attack, and so remained silent, —so grave, and apparently so absorbed in the inspection of the mosaic pavement on which he stood, that he did not notice the keen curious gaze Trevannion fixed on him, as if he wished to read all his mind. He presently informed Louis that the window was presented by himself, in memory of his father, and when Louis had sufficiently admired it, he kindly asked him to read prayers that morning, and informed him that the remainder of the day would be entirely at his disposal.

"You will like to see something of the new place and its churches, and after this day, I am afraid you will have no time. We shall be able to do without you to-day."

Louis thanked him, and began to say that he did not wish to take that day for a survey of the town, when Trevannion, asking him to excuse his abstraction, returned to the vestry and resumed his labor of correction. Louis had a short time for thought while his friend was engaged; but his mind was sadly startled, shocked, and interested. He had imagined before his arrival how much he should do and say in opposition to Trevannion's errors; but as yet they had only taken him by surprise, and he was dumb.

Before long the bells began to ring, and Trevannion soon laid aside his work, and talked to Louis about the vicarage and other indifferent topics, as if it had been any other day,

till the sexton came in to help him with his vestments. Nevinson came in at the same time, and exactly as the clock struck eleven, the three clergymen in their surplices entered the church; the beadle and sexton preceded them with wands, and opening a gate of the screen, with much ceremony ushered them to their places in the chancel, while from the other side poured in twelve chorister boys and five or six laymen, likewise in surplices. Louis thought he must have mistaken his way, and hesitating as the beadle stood back to let him step into one of the stalls, whispered something about the reading-desk. The man bowed low, and still pointed to the desk before him. Louis saw Bible and Prayer-book before him, and entered. As he rose from his knees, he glanced at Trevannion and Nevinson, but their composed countenances said all was right; and with some little nervous feeling, he stood up and looked through the carved screen at the congregation, and wondered how they would hear his voice. When the fine tones of the organ had nearly died away, the boys suddenly broke into, "I will arise." The effect was solemnly beautiful; Louis joined, and when it was concluded was sufficiently composed to read the Exhortation calmly through, though he found it necessary to exert his voice far more than he had ever done in his own little village church.

As the service proceeded, Louis grew more and more at his ease; the sweet words he had prayed from his childhood seemed to reassure him, and before long, he hardly noticed the strange faint glare of the large candles, burning in the colored daylight on the table, and was only impressed solemnly by the varied rays from the gorgeous window, the exclusiveness of the partitioned chancel, and the beautiful singing; while he who had intended to stand so prominently in opposition to the forms and ceremony of Trevannion's

party, turned to the east with clergy and choristers, almost ere he had thought whether it was wrong or right; and comforted himself that it was "a matter of no consequence; it was customary in cathedrals." What does the Holy word say? "He that despiseth little things, shall fall by little and little." Trevannion, still arrayed in his surplice and holding his cap in his hand, entered the pulpit. The cap was laid down on the cushion, and leaning gracefully against the pillar that supported the pulpit, with arms slightly folded, he gave forth a flowing moral harangue for twenty minutes, when, advancing to the front, he spread his arms around and pronounced the final benediction in a very papal manner. Louis had listened very eagerly for the love of Christ, but he listened in vain: he longed to go up and speak for the Saviour's honor, for his heart burned within him; and when they left the church, he walked silently home with Nevinson, only replying to his remarks by monosyllables. As soon as he entered the house he rushed upstairs, and remained in his room till dinner. He was agitated and distressed, and hardly seemed to know how or what to ask; but the silent distressful breathing of the Christian is never unnoticed. Even when he thinks he cannot pray, he often prays the more effectually.

Nevinson seemed rather anxious to know Louis's impression of the whole, and after several leading remarks and questions, Louis replied,—

"I don't like every thing: the church is very beautiful; but I wish the reading-desk were more among the congregation, I think they can hardly hear."

"Oh, yes, perfectly well," replied Nevinson, with a slight color. "There was a reading-desk on a line with the pulpit formerly, but Mr. Trevannion altered the arrangement; and

I agree with him that it is in better keeping, though I had some dislike to the idea at first."

"But why, Nevinson, why does Trevannion have those candles lighted? I could have thought myself in a Romish shrine."

"My dear Mortimer," replied Nevinson, "why should we reject what is admirable in the Catholic, because he is a Catholic? We are in far more danger of allowing holy places to be desecrated, than of attending too much to their lawful adornment."

Louis looked full at Nevinson, and said, "I think there is one great mistake in your theory. You forget that, now we are not under the Jewish dispensation, there is now no Holy of Holies on earth,—that priests are no longer to make prayers for the people in a covered sanctuary, while the congregation stand without, and wait the efficacy of the prayers they never hear. St. Paul warns his converts against praying in an unknown tongue: 'Else, when thou shalt bless with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.' Now I cannot see much difference between praying in an unknown tongue, and praying where the people cannot hear at all, or very imperfectly. The Romanists, whom I do not with you call *Catholics*, bring the example of the Jewish ceremonies forward in defence of mumbling their Latin mass, and I cannot help thinking there is something akin to their superstitions in these things."

"You will not think so soon, I hope," said Nevinson; "it takes you by surprise now, and appears worse than it is. However, I do not approve of the candles at all myself, so

we are as agreed there as I think we shall soon be on other points, if, indeed, we quarrel now about more than words."

They did not resume the subject, which Mrs. Nevinson changed immediately her husband had spoken. Louis inquired about some of the churches in the neighborhood, and set out after dinner to one recommended; but finding, as he anticipated, that the service bore much resemblance to that in Trevannion's church, he determined to choose for himself in the evening.

Accordingly, after tea, he asked the way to the church in which Mr. Strangeways preached; and, in answer to his host's rather anxious queries as to where he heard of him, he simply replied he had heard him spoken of in the train.

"You will not admire him much, I fancy," said Nevinson, quietly, as he parted from him at the garden-gate, after giving him the necessary directions; "but perhaps it may be as well you should hear him for yourself."

Louis soon reached the chapel of ease to which he was directed, and was shown into a pew with Mrs. Wybrow. His heart had been aching and restless during the day; but here it seemed to attain its usual quiet. It was like home. Not an ornament,—not a boss or carving to catch the eye was there. It was a plain square church, built almost on the model of a dissenting chapel, with huge square galleries and straight gaslights, but comfortable and warm, and full to crowding. There was plain, unpretending congregational singing, in which all seemed to join. Louis's heart and voice went alike in the glorious hymn,—

> "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
> Does his successive journeys run."

Hardly ever had church service seemed so sweet to him; the unity, the harmony, the warmth of spirit that seemed to per-

vade the assembly was most delightful, especially when contrasted with the cold solemnity and stateliness of the beautiful morning exhibition; and yet, when our hero, with his romantic ideas and refined taste, saw the plain unpromising-looking young man who filled the reading-desk, and heard his harsh voice and slightly common accent, perceptible when he began to read, he could hardly imagine this could be the popular man who would have been the proper incumbent of Trevannion's church. He changed his mind a little as the service proceeded; there was so much feeling in the manner in which the lessons were read and the hymn given out, that his surprise was modified when he saw the same individual mount the pulpit stairs; and here all provincial accent, all inequalities of voice, all ungainliness of person, were alike forgotten. Louis's heart only swelled with the music of the message which the gifted preacher delivered, as though his soul were indeed in it, his pale countenance glowing with ardor, his tone filling with enthusiasm. Louis confessed no common mind was there. The text was, "There is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." Louis sat with wrapt gaze fixed on the preacher. He had thought his father perfection, but eloquence like this he had never heard before, and he rejoiced both for himself and others that such a man had been raised up to preach fully the unsearchable riches of Christ. There were some allusions to the dangerous and melancholy doctrines disseminated in the town; but though boldly refuted, there was no rancor expressed against persons: it was but sorrow of heart and pious anger that men should dare to take any thing from the perfect finished work of Christ. Louis wondered as the preacher burned with holy zeal for the honor of his Lord, and his heart melted as the voice quivered with emotion in

deploring the fatal errors around them. That sermon seemed like a dream of bliss only too short; he would have listened all night; but the concluding hymn was sung, the blessing given, and the congregation poured out; and after assisting the lady in whose pew he sat to replace the books, he left the pew, only too glad that he was alone, and might be silent. He walked slowly home, and found Trevannion sitting with his friends.

"Well, have you made the most of your time?" said Trevannion. "Where have you been, and what have you seen this evening?"

Louis informed him; and very repugnant to him was the look of intense hatred and scorn Trevannion's face assumed at the mention of Mr. Strangeways' name, as he drawled out haughtily,—

"Well, and what did the young Calvinist say? You know whom you have to oppose now."

"Oppose!" said Louis. "He is a very fine preacher."

Trevannion crimsoned, and replied,—

"He hates me, and you, and Nevinson, with a perfect hatred,—as intensely as I DESPISE HIM."

He rose up, and wishing the friends good-night, departed, after expressing, rather abruptly, a hope that he should see Louis to-morrow, when they would more definitely settle their affairs.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth."—*Rom.* xiv. 4.

"The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."—*James* i. 20.

We do not mean to attempt to account for Trevannion's anxiety to obtain Louis's services, nor for the fact that, with views so diametrically opposite, the two clergymen came to any agreement. Some hinted that Trevannion wanted a musical curate, and knowing something of Louis's natural character, trusted to time to effect what he required in one; and others, that Louis, disarmed by the caution and *finesse* of his old schoolfellow, and haunted by his dangerous love of praise, which Trevannion fostered, forgot to declare openly, in the short time he had with his rector, his decided abhorrence of the lengths to which Trevannion's superstition carried him. Be this how it may, matters came to an amicable settlement; and Trevannion, trusting to his ecclesiastical machinery and Nevinson's influence, left his charge to Louis the Tuesday after his arrival.

In the afternoon of the same day Mr. Wells called on Louis. The interview was short; but from the few words that passed, Louis was prepared to revere and look up to his father's friend as an experienced Christian, able, under God, to guide and strengthen his hands; and he accepted with sincere pleasure an invitation from him to dinner on the following day.

On reaching Ivylands at the appointed hour on Wednesday, Louis was shown into the drawing-room, where he was

warmly and courteously received by Mr. Wells, and introduced to his daughter, and subsequently to three lady visitors, in one of whom he recognized Mrs. Wybrow, and in another his friend Salisbury's sister Fanny.

Miss Salisbury and our hero were mutually pleased at the unexpected rencontre, and as Louis had many questions to ask about his old schoolfellow, only stern duty prevented his stationing himself by the youngest lady in the house. Miss Wells, however, engrossed his first civilities; but these were soon interrupted by the announcement of another visitor, and Mr. Strangeways entered, and directly afterwards the party went in to dinner. As Mr. Wells led off the two elder ladies and Mr. Strangeways was honored with the lady of the house, our hero had the satisfaction of leading in Miss Salisbury, and very adroitly managed to obtain two or three pieces of information about her brothers, before they were well seated at table. The soup was hardly served, when Miss Wells asked him what he thought of the town? what he had seen of it? whether he thought the air relaxing? and so on, and Louis detailed for her benefit his general impressions of the whole, especially as compared with the country; and concluded by alluding slightly, though feelingly, to the advantage he considered he had derived from Mr. Strangeways' sermon on Sunday evening.

"What, then, you were one of Mr. Strangeways' hearers last Sunday?" said Mr. Wells, who had caught a word or two of his remark. "How came that?"

There was a pleased, bright expression in Mr. Wells' face as he spoke, and he looked quite affectionately at his young guest, as he replied,—

"I had heard of Mr. Strangeways, and easily discovered where I should find him. It was like home to hear Christ so

fully preached. I have wished to thank you for that sermon, sir," he added, meeting the pleased glance of the clergyman opposite to him.

Mr. Strangeways warmly expressed his satisfaction that they should be of the same mind; and Mr. Wells added,—

"I am glad to hear you say that, my friend. I see your father has begun at the beginning; nothing but bread will do for the children, they cannot be satisfied with a stone: I hope you will be bold; you have a responsible situation now in that benighted parish."

"It quite rejoiced me to see Mr. Mortimer at church on Sunday," said Mrs. Wybrow. "You know," she added, with a little smile at Louis, "we are all a little afraid of Mr. Trevannion's parish."

Louis bowed gravely, with a slight expression of displeasure at the allusion to Trevannion; and the lady perceiving it, changed the subject, by proceeding to inform Miss Wells of the amusing rencontre she and her friend had had with Mr. Mortimer, and their great delight on hearing Mr. Strangeways, and the immense advantage his ministry was; and the conversation turned upon the neighboring clergymen; and from this time, Louis, who had before rejoiced in the thought of the sweet counsel they were to take together that evening, and the refreshment and the advantage such conversation must be, heard nothing but histories of this and that person, interspersed with such ejaculations as, "rank Puseyite!" "rank Tractarian!" "rank Arminian!" "set of Freewillers!" and remarks about such a one being "very dubious;" and such another, not "understanding the truth;" and another, not preaching it; but of that truth Louis heard nothing, of the power of that truth he saw nothing, and he judged accordingly; hastily, as man will judge when he leans upon

his own judgment. He had yet to learn, though he thought he knew it, that there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. He had yet to learn the force of that inquiry, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?" He had yet to learn that the proportion of faith, the power of speech, the degree of love, differ in God's people, yet they are His children. We know not, when we condemn the evil-speaking of another, how, perhaps, that offender, deeply humbled at the remembrance of the sin in which he or she has indulged, may long kneel before the Almighty God with that prayer, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips." Yet Louis afterwards learned one great lesson from this,—that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. "It is good to be always zealously affected in a good cause," and to lift up the voice against the evil; but when Mr. Wells and Mr. Strangeways indulged in this religious gossip (for it was no better), they little knew the harm they did to the very cause they sought to advance; how their young friend silently listened, grew wearied and disgusted, and finally, all the indignant feeling which had been roused during the conversation in the railway-carriage was predominant, and he felt inclined to cast his lot in with the despised and vilified party. His lip curled with scorn as he repeated to himself, "Nevinson shows his faith by his works. His is the religion that exalteth not itself, and thinketh no evil." He heard much of "false charity;" and the thought passed across his mind, "but the other extreme is *no charity* at all;" and he rose from his chair. The same conversation was resumed on their return to the drawing-room, to which they very soon followed the ladies; and after listening silently for a short time, during his necessary operation of drinking coffee, he withdrew from the talkers, and

took a seat near Fanny Salisbury, who was knitting at the table, away from the lady with whom she came, and scarcely raised her eyes or changed her position.

"You are not much interested in the discussion, Miss Fanny," he said.

"No, I am not," she replied, raising her eyes to him. "Are you?"

There was a very significant glance between them, and a slight smile curled the corners of Fanny's mouth.

"I do not call it a discussion, because every one is of the same opinion, which is, that every one is bad but the good and true."

She spoke in a very low voice, but so archly that Louis smiled.

"And who are the good and true?" he said.

"I need not tell you," she replied. "They who know 'the truth fully,' I suppose. As for the others," she added, very gravely, "there are some who would quench the smoking flax, and tread down the bruised reed in contempt."

Louis looked surprised, and spoke with greater interest.

"It will seem strange to you, perhaps," he said, "but to say the truth, I have had but little experience in doctrinal differences, knowing, I believe, that there are such things as Arminianism and Calvinism, and perhaps able to give a categorical definition of each; but I thought all true Christians believed their Bibles; that the truth was to know the love of Christ and His perfect and all-sufficient work."

"You have been very happy, then," said Fanny, knitting away very fast. "What a pity any one should know any thing else; and how strange that I should have heard more than you; but really, if faith went with man's teaching, I should believe nothing now. I have been assailed in turn

by High and Low Church, Dissenters, Romanists, and Unitarians."

"And how have you come out?"

"You ask that?" said Fanny, lifting her eyes again almost reproachfully. "Mr. Mortimer, does not God make a way to escape—always?"

"Indeed he does, Miss Fanny," said Louis, slowly; "and yet—how strange that many of the sincere should fall into error."

"Ah! now you are going beyond me; perhaps they do not look for the *way*. There seems to me an unerring sign-post."

"Let me hear what," said Louis.

"The WHOLE Bible," said Fanny. "You will think me very presumptuous, I am afraid, Mr. Mortimer," she said, shyly, during the pause that ensued. "I am too independent for a young lady, I am afraid."

"Presumptuous," repeated Louis. "Oh, no! I was only thinking with some astonishment how you have come in contact with all these different persuasions you speak of."

"I am now visiting a Roman Catholic aunt," replied Fanny, "and her father confessor assails me very often; but I do not find any thing there very formidable, Mr. Mortimer. He trusts to stupefy, not to *convince;* he talks of essences, and *iddities*, and *quiddities*, and *oddities*, and *monods*, or *nomads*, —I don't know what any of them mean,—and tells me of the 'authority of a church,' I only find mentioned in Revelations, and there we know *how;* and I think of something else, or laugh at him. There is no Bible there at all, so I do not feel in any danger; nor have I felt in any danger from Unitarians. As Dr. Arnold says, it is like touching a corpse, so cold, so lifeless, it always makes me shudder. I had a

Unitarian schoolfellow, poor girl! But you know, Mr. Mortimer, a child with a Bible may upset a Unitarian or a Romanist; and of the two, the last is the best."

"It always seems to me," said Louis, "that that dreadful Socinian doctrine is one that does not admit of the slightest outward fellowship. You remember what St. John says: 'If there come any unto us, and bring not the doctrine of Christ, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.'"

"I have not noticed that," replied Fanny. "It is very solemn."

"'Have no fellowship with the works of darkness,' is the command. We are certainly too apt to be careless of God's honor in matters of social intercourse."

"The only perplexing differences to me," said Fanny seriously, "are those among Bible Christians. Where the Bible is brought forward, I sometimes feel very doubtful, now leaning to one and now to the other. Do not you think, Mr. Mortimer, that many take only the extreme view of either side, and forget how they are joined?"

"I do indeed," said Louis earnestly. "You have not found any good arise from this doctrinal discussion?"

"Oh, no!" said Fanny; "unless it is that the plain Word of God is so very precious—so very precious afterwards."

"It does not improve our feelings towards one another, does it?" said Louis.

"Oh, no!" said Fanny. "If I believed all that one party said, I should never speak to a Dissenter; and if another, to any one called High Church; and yet, I love, I hope, all that love Christ, without thinking what they are called: that is not of much importance."

"My dear Fanny," said the quieter of the two ladies, "we must not forget our long drive; the fly is here, and your aunt will wonder where we are. It is a great treat," she added, as she bid Mr. and Miss Wells good-night. "Dear Fanny is so debarred from such intercourse at present; I knew I might bring her."

Fanny bid adieu very demurely; but there was an ominous pursing-up of the small mouth. She gave her hand to Louis as she passed, and he held the door open, taking care to ask her address, as he assisted her in putting on her shawl in the hall, and then returned to the sitting-room, very much dissatisfied that the same topics were still under review between Mr. Wells and Mrs. Wybrow, Miss Wells and Mr. Strangeways.

Louis took his leave a few minutes after Fanny's departure, pleading Nevinson's early hours in excuse for his. He almost ran home, and directly the servant had opened the door to his impatient knock, he rushed past her, to her great surprise, threw his hat on the table, and walked into his friend's dining-room in his great-coat.

Here an unexpected scene awaited him. Among the many plans for the improvement of the ignorant poor of the populous parish under his care he had devised, Nevinson and his wife had a weekly class of such parents as could come after their children were safely in bed, or others who were engaged during the day. The women were taught to mend and make, a branch of useful knowledge in which the poor are lamentably deficient; and while Mrs. Nevinson superintended this, her husband read aloud a chapter in the Bible, and explained it, and then some pleasant little tract, previously chosen for the purpose. Nevinson seemed to have but one thought, "How can I best employ my talent?" and

every day had its own prominent work marked out. The sudden opening of the door caused a general turning of heads in that direction.

Louis stood still a moment.

"Am I interrupting you?"

"No, we have just done, Mr. Mortimer," said Mrs. Nevinson; "indeed, we are rather late. Shall we have prayers, dear?" she said, turning to her husband.

"Yes, it is quite late."

He rang the bell, and the servants entering, a hymn led by Mrs. Nevinson was sung, the simple service performed, and the company kindly dismissed.

When they were gone, Nevinson turned to Louis with an inquiry respecting his enjoyment. Louis was standing rather gloomily leaning against the wall, and Mrs. Nevinson echoed her husband's question before he seemed to hear it.

"Now, the end of the commandment is charity," he said, abruptly. "I have not enjoyed myself at all, Nevinson. I have been annoyed."

"My dear Mortimer," said Nevinson.

The slightest possible glance passed between him and his wife, and they changed the subject by making some little remark on the poor mothers who had just left.

"I have been disappointed, Nevinson," he said, scarcely heeding the remark. "I shall never care about Mr. Strangeway's preaching again: it is faith without works; it is nothing but railing against those who differ from him."

"Nay," said Nevinson, very kindly, while a little flush mounted in his pale cheek, and he laid his hand on Louis's arm; "you will not say so in heaven, Mortimer. He is a good man, and strives to do good. He gives away a great deal to the poor. I hear often of his charitable deeds,

as well as of his powers of preaching. You know," he added, with a little huskiness, "we do not agree at all in doctrine; but we must acknowledge excellence wherever we find it."

"Though I give all my goods to feed the poor," said Louis.

"I believe, however much we differ, that he is truly single-minded, Mortimer; that he only thinks of delivering his message, and would brave any obloquy for the advancement of his opinions."

"Of his *opinions!* Yes," said Louis scornfully.

"My dear Mortimer, you are not like yourself. Have you had supper?"

"No—yes, thank you. Nevinson, you think no evil. Oh, Nevinson! 'charity beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.'"

Nevinson looked a little perplexed, his eyes dilated, and his happy expression grew more sweet, as he replied, gently,—

"Well, dear Mortimer, you must hope all things. You know how much pain that spares us, does it not? The Word of God is always shielding His children from little vexations and heart-burning, when they walk by its light." He paused, and added slowly, "How wonderful it seems that men are so blind to their own happiness as to walk in darkness!"

Nothing more was said on either side. Louis seated himself with a heart full of enthusiasm for Nevinson. In a few minutes he mentioned his meeting with Fanny Salisbury, and from thence easily digressed to old times, and entertained his friends for half an hour with old school recollections; and when they parted, his excitement seemed to have died away.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs."—*John* xxi. 15.

"Precept upon precept, line upon line; here a little and there a little."—*Is.* xxviii. 10.

Before the next Sunday arrived, Louis had gained a general idea of his new parish, could find his way about it pretty well by himself, and was qualified to take his own share in its duties without Nevinson's assistance. He also took possession of the Rectory on the Saturday, and having arranged with his friend to take the Sunday-school in the morning, he set out from his house after breakfast to commence operations.

The school-house was a new and commodious building, situated near the church. Masters and mistresses had been carefully provided, and the greatest care and circumspection were exercised in inducing orderly attendance and mental improvement. The little quiet assembly at Dashwood had not well prepared Louis for the hundred and fifty faces, all strange, all indifferent, which met his inquiring look as he entered the boys' school-room that morning. They were just assembled, and the master was walking round to see that all were in their places, with clean faces and hands, provided with books, ready for Mr. Mortimer's first visit. Louis made his way among them to the desk, and was immediately at-

tended upon by the master, who laid an open prayer-book before him.

The late excellent Mr. Bickersteth insists greatly, in his advice to a young friend, always to go "from the closet to the pulpit." Surely this advice will as well apply to the Sunday-school teacher of every denomination. Those precious little lambs wait on him for their food; but how can he give it to them who has not just received it at his Father's hands? How can he expect a harvest who has not sought a blessing from the Giver of the increase?

Louis had been earnest in meditation and prayer that morning, that a blessing might rest on his work, and that he might duly estimate the immense value of the souls committed to his charge, and his responsibility as their watchman. It was with a full heart that he looked on his young charge, and there was something in his silent gaze that hushed the talkers, and awed the giddy into an outward attention to the few words he addressed to them before prayers.

"My dear boys, I dare say you will be very attentive to me for a few minutes this morning, for you will be rather curious to know what the new clergyman will say. Now, I want just to say a very few words before we kneel down to the Almighty God about all our duties on this blessed day. Tell me, who sets apart this day?" The children immediately answered as with one voice.

"Now, who can repeat the fourth commandment?"

There were fifty hands held out, and Louis signed to one to repeat it, and then added two or three simple questions, to show the nature of the Christian's observance of the Sabbath. He then continued,—

"Now I want you all—*all*—the very little ones as well as

the oldest here—to try to remember this all the day long; '*Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy.*' They are very few words. Now, all repeat them."

He made them all repeat them twice, and then continued—

"But you know we have all very sinful hearts; we cannot keep the Sabbath holy by ourselves. If you have no help, you will go astray: some will quarrel in and out of school; some will play at marbles or other games, and all will think idle thoughts and speak idle words. What must we do?"

"Pray to God, sir," said several voices.

"That is just what we must do," replied Louis, very seriously. "We are about to kneel down, and I am going to ask for the Holy Spirit to teach us all to keep it; and if I ask in my heart, God will help me; but will he help those who whisper idle words at his footstool, and those who laugh, and those who think about idle things, or look at their lessons while they are pretending to pray? tell me."

His eye wandered over several abashed little faces, and many voices answered, "No, sir."

"Then we have also to remember that this is a very joyful day: 'This is the day the Lord hath made; we should be glad and rejoice in it.'

> 'Angels praise Him; so will we,
> Poor and sinful though we be.'

How good God is to give us one day in seven,—

> 'That we may learn the way to heaven;
> Or else we never should have thought
> About religion as we ought.'

Now we will begin with a hymn; and remember, God looks at the heart,—at the thoughts,—not at the lips."

Louis had inquired for a hymn-book, and had been informed that they only sang chants; and not knowing their tunes, he desired the master to lead; and they all joined in the beautiful canticle,

"O come! let us sing unto the Lord."

They then knelt down; and there was something in the little address, and the serious joy of the new clergyman, that impressed the boys this morning, for they were outwardly very attentive.

Prayers being over, Louis signified to the master, that he would look round the school for a short time, to make himself acquainted with the system, and with the capacity of the scholars, and then would take some of the bigger boys. The usual routine was accordingly followed, with Church catechism, collects, spelling, and that admirable arrangement of Bible precepts and promise, "Faith and Duty." The children were very quiet and orderly for so large a party; but before long, Louis became sensible of a great coldness and apathy in most of the pupils and teachers. The Church catechism and their duties as baptized members of the Church of England were the great things insisted upon with the elder boys, and accuracy in spelling with the younger; and no attempt seemed made to interest the younger children by relating to them some of those sweet stories of Jesus' love, which the very babe can understand from the lips that love the task. Louis thought there might be some little constraint from his presence, and he stopped before a class of half a dozen little ones, all under seven years old, taught by one of the older pupils, and seating himself on the form behind them, took one upon each knee. The children looked shyly up in his face, and then, with that unerring instinct of child-

hood, smiled at one another, and the rest of the little class nestled closer to him. They had each of them a paper with monosyllables of four letters, which they were slowly and painfully spelling to their teacher. Louis took one of the papers, and glancing down the columns, turned to them cheerfully, and said,

"Who can spell *good?*"

One child slowly and carefully performed the required task.

"Now *all*," he said quickly. But the others were at fault; so telling them all to listen, Louis made the senior repeat it again, and then they were all to try together.

"And now, don't forget it, while I tell you something about the good Saviour, the good Shepherd."

He asked them some little questions about the meaning of "good," showing them that they had naughty hearts, and that only God could make them good; and then they were asked to spell the word again, and Louis told them about Jesus blessing the little children. He was distressed to find that they hardly knew that precious name; and before he went away, he turned to the account in his pocket Bible, and putting it into the hands of the teacher, desired him to teach them that sweet verse, "Suffer the little children to come unto me;" as he left them, he looked kindly on the little ones.

"I hope you will take a great deal of pains to learn that verse for me; I will hear it next Sunday, if God keeps us all alive. You will not forget how to spell *good* now; and remember, if we want to be good, we must pray to the good Lord Jesus, who has said, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me.'"

He then summoned the two upper classes to the master's desk, desiring them to bring their Bibles. He took the

Epistle and Gospel, and went carefully through both before church-time, keeping up the attention of his pupils by judicious questions and happy remarks. He was, on the whole, pleased with their answers.

One innovation Louis ventured to carry out this day, after some demurs about the propriety of altering any thing in Trevannion's absence, and blaming himself much for not speaking of it when arranging his duties, and this was, of desiring that the candles should not be lighted on the communion-table until further orders. It was a busy and happy Sunday. He preached twice that day; and such was the effect of the new, warm declarations heard there, that in a few Sundays the congregation would bear a small comparison even with that of Mr. Strangeways. Ah, there is nothing that will supply the place of the pure Gospel. Untainted yet with the errors around him, Louis was gladly heard, and the poor and ignorant retired from church talking together, and praising God for all they had heard.

It must not be supposed that Nevinson's sermons were of the same class of those of Trevannion; but he was not naturally so gifted as Louis as a preacher, and his tincture of error was carried sometimes through his discourses enough to drive away the more critical and spiritually minded. Louis was run after, and it was dangerous; but as long as he kept humble, fearing lest he should be carried away by man's praise; as long as he came from the closet to the pulpit, he was not puffed up; but only felt the more, that "Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God alone can give the increase." Nevinson did not fail to inform Trevannion of the increase of his congregation; and Trevannion, satisfied for the present, and ignorant of part of the cause, expressed his gratification thereat in very polite terms to his substitutes.

There was one concession, besides turning to the east, which Louis was prevailed upon to make to the prejudices of his friend,—that of preaching in the surplice. It was against his inclination, and he saw no harm in the thing itself; but surely it was something like a second step in the wrong direction—something like the "appearance of evil."

CHAPTER XXVI.

"It is impossible but that offences must come; but woe unto them by whom they come."—*Luke* xvii. 1.

We have already remarked that Louis's previous acquaintance with a country school had not prepared him for the different aspect of a large town one. This remark will equally apply to the whole parish. Louis felt as if he had never known a minister's responsibility before. In Dashwood, for years under constant and careful supervision, the young had grown up with him, and the small population and few temptations had kept them comparatively innocent. But here, excepting a couple of streets of respectable inhabitants, was a square mass of three thousand poor ignorant human beings, many living in small courts and alleys, of such utter filth and wretchedness, that this very circumstance alone seemed an insuperable bar to all hope for improvement. The aspect of whole courts seemed to be sullen apathy and reckless depravity. The young minister's heart yearned over them, and sank at the almost overwhelming amount of his joint cure. Everywhere distress seemed calling out, "Come

over and help us;" and how could he do it effectually? He could not see want and nakedness and not relieve it to the utmost of his power; but often, after emptying his purse on some apparently wretched objects, he found all had been spent in drink, and at his next visit the recipients no better for his bounty. It needed all Nevinson's previous experience to prevent a lavish expenditure of Louis's means on worthless objects.

"How can I go and tell of the love of Jesus, and of his boundless compassion," he urged; "of his constant readiness to hear and help, if I show an indifference to those very troubles that often hinder them from listening? I often think, Nevinson, of the remark of a poor woman to a gentleman who was urging on her the necessity of preparation for another world: '*Ah, sir! if you were as cold and hungry as I am, you could not listen.*' What a difference cold and fatigue make on our own feelings, Nevinson; we forget far too often, when we are with others, how dependent the mind is often on the body."

Louis said this with tears in his eyes, and Nevinson proceeded to show him of the many ways in which he could supply relief more efficaciously. He told him many little secrets of his wife's household management in preparing soups and clothing in the cold weather, of coal tickets and clothing clubs, and lending clubs and associations for distribution of meat, and for supplying work; and, finally, Louis decided on giving money cautiously, and whenever it was practicable, to consult, before giving relief, with his judicious friends on the best way of affording it to the distress which constantly presented itself.

Mr. Wells did not lose sight of our hero, and often especially invited him to his house, besides the general invita-

tion he had at first given; but there was something there that Louis never seemed to get over. His warmth for Nevinson was always in the ascendant, and Mr. Wells' bold and somewhat hot invectives against "Freewillers" and "Arminians," always seemed to have an indirect leaning to his friends, and kept him in a constant state of hostility to all Mr. Wells and his favorite preacher advanced. He was always contrasting the two with Nevinson in his mind, always feeling that he felt more spiritually minded when with his own friend; and the consequence was at last, in his zeal for Nevinson, he almost insensibly imbibed some of his erroneous opinions, his zeal and veneration for the apostolic succession, and his views of sacramental efficacy greatly increasing; and though the constant communion in which he lived guarded him from losing sight of Christ crucified, it sometimes tinged his sermons with a little obscurity, and confused the poor, among whom with Nevinson he labored so indefatigably. Nevinson's constant correspondence with Trevannion afforded him an opportunity of alluding to Louis's strengthened mind, as he termed that which was too sadly a proof of his weakness.

His veneration for ecclesiastical forms was gradually increasing so much, that he was seriously considering the expediency of listening to Trevannion's oft-repeated wish of intoning the service.

Among other places which Louis constantly visited was an almshouse, where he met with some interesting Christians. When his new ideas were becoming sufficiently strengthened to be at all perceptible, he, while paying a visit to one of the old women, had been in a confused manner insisting on the efficacy of baptism, when the aged saint, respectfully laying her withered hand on his arm, said,—

"Sir, days should speak. May I make so bold as to speak? I am an old woman, near heaven, I hope, not so learned as you, sir; but Balaam's ass, when the Lord chose, once reproved the prophet."

"Don't be afraid, Smith," he said, smiling. "What reproof have you to administer now?"

"No, dear sir," she replied, while a tear sprang to her eye, "I know God's grace keeps you too humble to despise the words even of the poor and ignorant. Sir, when you come to warm the heart of the redeemed sinner, and when you want to lead the unthinking sinner, tell them all of Christ's love, as you used. Don't tell them of the Church of England, and how they may win heaven by keeping the Commandments, as some do, sir; not you yet, sir. Tell them, as you used to tell them, that they are lost, helpless sinners, and can do nothing to save themselves. They won't feel the blessing of baptism till they are made new creatures. Oh! my dear gentleman, my heart has been praying for you night and morning since you came among us like an angel sent from God. Our hearts rejoiced when we first heard you in the church. I mind the text; it was, 'He said unto me, It is done.' Oh! sir, we love you and dear Mr. Nevinson dearly. Dear Mr. Nevinson, his sweet face does one good, and his kind voice. I am as glad to see him as if he put a pound in my hand. Oh! sir, Mr. Trevannion's very far gone. God keep you and Mr. Nevinson from that!"

Louis did not turn proudly away, as Trevannion would have done, at the idea of an old woman presuming to speak in such a manner to him, an ordained minister of "the Church," nor quietly, with a grave, reproving air, as Nevinson perhaps might have done; but something seemed to say she was right; something within him yearned for the

old bright feeling before he meddled with controversy; and sweetly thanking the old woman for her anxiety, with a little rebuke at her mention of Trevannion to him, he read her a chapter, and heard her talk of her favorite texts and hymns, and after praying with her, took his leave.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee, in whose heart are Thy ways; who passing through the valley of Baca, maketh it a well; the rain also filleth the pools. O Lord of Hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee!"—*Ps.* lxxxiv.

"Also, I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send? and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I: send me."—*Is.* vi. 8.

Summer had come. Louis's health was now quite re-established, and the time of his engagement had already expired; but he waited from week to week for Trevannion's return. It was now daily expected, and Louis walked occasionally to the railway-station from the almshouses which were in its vicinity, at the hour the only train arrived by which he could come. The parishioners, rich and poor, had become greatly attached to him, and were truly sorry at the prospect of losing him, the school children especially looking upon their gentle pastor as their friend,—for he had mixed so much among them, and had so earnestly sought their welfare. It had been his custom to have them, both boys and girls, by a class at a time, to spend the evening once a week with him, when his housekeeper provided a nice tea, and presided at the entertainment, assisting as well in the innocent games that followed. Louis always drew them round

the fire or table before they parted, and told them a Bible story; and many were the precious texts and sweet hymns with which he stored their minds from time to time; visiting their homes—as he did constantly,—he learned much respecting their habits and characters, their opportunities of doing right and temptation to do wrong, that he was enabled to improve to their advantage, seeking to impress upon each one his individual responsibility in using the talent committed to his or her charge. Knowing how short his time was among them, he was most anxious to improve his own aright. There was, however, something in his tone and manner more careful and anxious than when he first came to E——; he did not know that the increasing influence of the doctrines to which he insensibly leaned was doing its sure work in robbing him temporarily of his confidence and joy; but as yet they were not sufficiently his own to create any apprehension in his congregation as to his soundness. It is written in the Word of God, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." And again, "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." The time was come that the band of error was to be broken from him, and the film to be removed from his eyes, that he might see on what a precipice he had been standing, and how surely his feet had been saved from falling.

One Saturday afternoon Louis was expecting a larger party than usual of the school children to tea, as a sort of farewell visit, and Mr. and Mrs. Nevinson had promised to come and help do the honors. Louis strolled on the railway platform for the second or third time. The train he came to meet arrived almost immediately, but there was no Trevannion; and, after looking about a few minutes, he was going to re-

tire, when his attention was arrested by a figure very familiar to him. The white neckcloth proclaimed his clerical capacity, and a mourning band, covering the hat to within half an inch of the top, told a tale of bereavement. The stranger was looking after some luggage, and turning his head in Louis's direction, revealed a pleasant, gentlemanly face, perfectly well known, and yet Louis could not for an instant recall it. There was an expression of placid resignation that seemed to speak a volume of a chastened spirit and of sanctified affliction. Presently he turned round again to speak to one of the porters, and this time Louis's mystification vanished.

"It must be Meredith," he said, walking quickly up to him. "Meredith! this is an unexpected pleasure."

"It is," replied his old friend, heartily shaking his hand; "I did not expect to meet you so soon, though I was coming to see you. I am passing through, and had previously arranged to spend the night with you, if you could accommodate me."

"That I can most conveniently, as I have a large house to myself. Why, what a long time it is since we heard of you! It must be nearly a twelvemonth. I think you are a worse scribe than we are. I shall be so glad to hear about you. I expect your story will be a parallel to my friend Nevinson's happiness. Here is a coach already, and your luggage in."

They entered, and, as Louis seated himself opposite his friend, he continued:

"How came you in these parts? Where are you going?"

"That's a long story," he said, smiling such a sweet sorrowful smile that Louis looked wonderingly.

"I am going to London, and thence to Africa."

"You to Africa, Meredith! You, leave your happy home! What does Mrs. Meredith say to that, does she go with you?"

Louis repented the abrupt question, and wondered at his

want of thought, as his friend's face turned ashy pale, and an expression of great pain passed over it. He replied, however, with tolerable calmness,—

"Her memory does. Did you not get my letter?"

"Indeed, I did not!" exclaimed Louis, seizing his friend's hand. "My dear Meredith, my dear Meredith! how indifferent you must have thought me!"

"I did not write it myself," answered Meredith, in a low voice; "perhaps there was some mistake about the address. I don't know how it was."

He turned away his head, and leaned out of the window a minute or two, as if watching the motion of the wheels, while Louis sat looking at him in sympathizing silence. At length he drew in his head, and, pointing to the new church, asked if that were St. Margaret's; and, on Louis's affirmatory reply, admired it much.

"Have you much duty?"

"Yes; prayers twice every day, and three services on Sunday, besides two weekly and one Sunday service at the almshouse chapel."

"A great deal of work," said Meredith. "I fancy we country parsons know little of work. Have you many poor?"

Louis was beginning to give some information on the state of the poor, when the fly stopped at the vicarage-house just as the party of children entered. As the gentlemen dismounted, Louis mentioned his juvenile gathering, asking if Meredith would object to it.

"It will be over at eight, and we can join them or not, as you like, after you have dined. I always dine early, as I find it more convenient; but my housekeeper will soon get something for you, if you will excuse the extemporaneous nature of the entertainment."

"I thank you, I have already dined, and shall enjoy your little party as much as you will."

The housekeeper received prompt orders to make every thing ready for the unexpected visitor, and before long Mr. and Mrs. Nevinson arrived, and they all went in to the children. There was as little constraint as possible in the presence of the stranger, for he was soon one among them, and though not quite so active and lively as the others, performed his share in the entertainments. When the children had had tea, Louis took his friends into another room, where the same repast was provided for them, leaving the children to two servants' care till they were ready to return. At half-past seven he assembled them, reminded them of the approaching Sabbath, and when they had sung the Saturday night's hymn, he sent them home, giving them a text to remember for the next day. Mr. and Mrs. Nevinson took their leave shortly after, but not before the former had obtained the promise of a sermon from Meredith for the next morning. Meredith readily complied, though Louis urged his fatigue.

Meredith seemed much pleased with Louis's friend as well as with his school *fête;* he did not again allude to his recent loss, though in their quiet conversation he gave Louis a detail of his plans of operations as missionary under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society, and there was an eagerness and anxiety for the prosperity of the great cause about him, which was most refreshing to our hero,—like a strain of old familiar music long since forgotten, for his own interest in the missionary cause had been considerably deadened while at E———; neither Trevannion nor Nevinson patronizing the Church Missionary Society, and Mr. Wells seemingly indifferent about any missions at all.

Meredith's whole spirit seemed to say with the willing prophets of old, "Here am I, send me." Oh, how one zealous soul stirs up others, and how the lukewarm deadens those in his sphere of action! "We are not our own, we are bought with a price." Time, talents, words, thoughts, actions, and *influence* are all His.

The old schoolfellows retired early that night, but not before Meredith had asked many particulars about his dear friends at Dashwood.

Louis knelt long in heartfelt prayer for his afflicted friend; but he knew not how much longer Meredith walked up and down his room, and bent prostrate before the Throne of Grace for strength to bear cheerfully his great loss; for balm to soothe the wound that had that day been roughly opened; and not till he could say, "Thy will be done," and could look up smiling, amid tears, in faith, to the bright mansions prepared for the beloved of God, did he lie down; when he soon fell into a sweet slumber, in possession of that peace which the world can neither give nor take away!

The Sunday-school the next morning left Louis but little time with Meredith before the morning service at church. Meredith called for him at the school, and they walked together to church. Meredith was very silent, and as they entered the beautiful building he looked very carefully around. Louis led him up the centre aisle to the chancel, and had he been on the watch would have noticed many a change of expression pass over his face; admiration, enthusiasm, and then a bolder, loftier glance, that settled into something of a sorrowful gaze, as they trod the marble chancel. He did not speak, however, even to admire the monumental window, though he paused a moment before it. Following Louis into the vestry, he laid his Bible and a closely-written manuscript

on the table. Nevinson was there, and while the clerk was assisting all three, Meredith asked if he should assist in the communion service.

"You have both hard work this morning, and I shall be able to try the church before preaching."

"Thank you, I shall be much obliged to you," replied Louis; "but I dare say you know what it is never to feel tired till the work is over. Reading prayers is always a refreshment."

While they proceeded in state to their stalls, Meredith gravely watched the train of surpliced singers, and once or twice during the service his eyes turned with a serious scrutinizing gaze from Louis to Nevinson, and back again, and seemingly insensible to the general move to the east in the Creed, he stood still facing the north. As he and Nevinson left the communion-table, and retired to the vestry, he threw off his surplice, and begged to borrow a gown. Nevinson politely suggested to him their custom of using the surplice. Meredith hesitated a moment.

"Well, I suppose I must not break your rules," he answered, "as I am an interloper for this Sunday. There is no more harm in one than the other. It is but a party badge. I am afraid," he added, with a little color, "we are both taken by surprise. You will at any rate forgive me after my confession, and we shall not respect each other the less."

A cloud passed over Nevinson's face. He made no reply as Meredith donned the surplice again, and declining a second time the proffer from the clerk, of a cap originally belonging to Trevannion, proceeded to the pulpit, followed by a few anxious and rather displeased looks from his colleague. There was a depth in the silent petition he offered for

strength to preach and for a blessing on the word preached, which none present knew, though the power of that petition was visible in the force with which his bold discourse came home to the hearts of many that day.

Louis folded his arms, and sat back with earnest attention to hear what his friend would say.

He heard.

"And Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."

Nevinson glanced uneasily at Louis, and found Louis's eyes fixed on him. They colored, and, prepared again to listen, Louis with more curiosity than displeasure, and Nevinson rather angry and exceedingly annoyed, expecting an invective against Puseyism. Yet before ten minutes had elapsed, the attention of both was so riveted that the anger and curiosity were equally forgotten. Meredith commenced quietly, as if he were unconscious that the erroneous doctrines to which he alluded in the course of his sermon, were held by his hearers, with a slight view of the whole of the chapter, and then with the wonderful effect which Paul's "new doctrines" must have produced on the curious Athenians. He then, without a pause, as one who had the mastery of his subject, drew a spiritual parallel in the state of the Athenians to that of many nominal Christians. And this he did without the slightest tinge of personality. Turning to several passages in Galatians, he spoke on the obligation entailed on all who considered the observance of the law necessary to salvation, and drawing a rapid and forcible dis-

tinction between the Jewish and Christian dispensation, mentioned the confusion that existed in the minds of many Christians as to the division of the two. Then taking up the last part of his text, "Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you," he burst into a glowing description of the unalterable covenant of grace; and here it seemed as if he had burst the restraint the more argumentative part of his discourse had imposed. It was heartfelt experience and joyful trust of that unchangeable love he sought to exalt: "This is my friend and my beloved, the chiefest among ten thousand." At times he leaned upon the pulpit cushion, and seemed lost for words to express the joyful, glorious sense he had of His abiding love. "How different was that spirit of childlike confidence and willing obedience," he said, "to the spirit of bondage which deemed it necessary to win its salvation by the observance of the rigid law—vain hope! The law said, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die;' Christ is not a half Saviour." When he had dwelt on the comfort and inexpressible happiness of him who has found Christ, of his comfort in sorrow, and lastly, his hope in the world to come, he concluded with a grave warning to those who might in a cavilling spirit accuse him of encouraging laxity in works. "Shall we sin, that grace may abound?" showing that he who has been taught of the Spirit, and is a true believer, *cannot* wilfully sin; that faith without works is a dead faith, but the living faith will ever work by love.

Nevinson had forgotten his anger: there had been nothing which reflected personally on him or Louis, and the glowing, glorious Gospel declaration found a response in his heart. Louis sat almost as much absorbed as he had been by Mr. Strangeways' discourse. But the sermon was over, the simple benediction had been pronounced, the organ

pealed forth, and the congregation dispersed to wonder who had preached; some to profit, others to criticise his voice, style, and doctrine, and to lose all advantage; others, resuming their worldly business as soon as they were beyond the church doors, forgot the sounds as soon as they ceased. Others heard and rejoiced; but the good seed sown withered, for it was sown on stony ground. Ah, how often may we mourn with the yearning minister of God—who has felt as if he would die, if his people might believe the words at his mouth—in the words of the prophet Ezekiel,—

"They come unto thee as my people cometh, and my people sit before thee, and they hear my words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after covetousness. And lo! thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not."

Nevinson and Lewis both thanked Meredith for his sermon, but there was a degree of constraint in Nevinson's manner. He declined Louis's invitation to dine, and bade him and Meredith adieu at the vestry door. Meredith and Louis returned to the vicarage, where a cold dinner awaited them. Their conversation was such as becometh saints.

"They spake of Him they loved."

And though Louis said but little of Meredith's sermon, he thought much, and portions were constantly recurring to his mind in the course of the day. The bands by which he had lately been lightly held seemed all at once to have burst, and the joyousness of spirit which these new reflections called forth at times made him hardly know where he was. Meredith read prayers for him in the afternoon; and he almost won-

dered why he left out one or two remarks that had been written down in his sermon. When afternoon service was over, the friends went together to visit a sick parishioner; and after a short rest and tea at home, there was the evening service; and it was not till nearly nine o'clock that, with their little supper before them in Trevannion's library, they were alone for any purposes of conversation. Louis was rather tired, and said little until prayers were ended. He asked Meredith to perform this service for him; and when the servants left them alone again, he suddenly threw himself into an armchair, and said abruptly,—

"Meredith, what made you choose that text to-day? You took me quite by surprise. You do not always preach extempore, I suppose?"

"What makes you think I preached extempore?" asked Meredith.

"I am *sure* you did," replied Louis, with a slight smile. "I just now peeped into that neat manuscript you took out of your pocket. You did not preach on any text in Isaiah to-day."

Meredith colored a little; but he saw Louis was not offended, and answered,—

"I once before preached on that text, and remembering the heads of my sermon, was able to preach without notes; I hope without much confusion. I seldom write my sermons fully out."

"But why did you change your text?" persisted Louis.

Meredith looked very earnestly at Louis, without answering.

"What made you think you were among idolaters?"

"Is not that recollection always applicable in a mixed congregation?" asked Meredith, still looking at Louis. "Are there not always many who worship God ignorantly? My

dear Louis, I cannot tell you how grieved I always am when I see those good tidings of great joy, ignorantly covered up by legal bondage or human observances; and it is often done by those who are very zealous for God's glory."

"But why did you change it?" persisted Louis. "Because you think we ignorantly worship God? But tell me, Meredith, what is there wrong in reverence for those things set apart for holy purposes? There is and has been a great deal of laxity and indifference to her principles, within the very heart of the Church of England herself—indifference to God's glory."

"If you define God's glory to consist in church decorations, and chancel-screens, and turning to the east, and reading the prayers where the congregation cannot hear them, I think the greater laxity the better."

"Well, I did not like the reading-desk arrangement, I own," said Louis; "but why quarrel with church decorations? Will not a reverential mind delight to adorn the house of his God, to show all possible honor to His sanctuary?"

"Certainly no one can blame a reverence for sacred things; and if they are founded on a right basis, it will not go too far," replied Meredith; "but these errors began with church decorations, and the spiritually-minded look jealously upon the lavish expenditure of it."

Now, as I do not mean to make my little volume a vehicle for doctrinal discussion, I pass over the long conversation that ensued on the Baptismal service and the Church articles. Louis battled for some time in defence of his later views, but at last acknowledged his friend's superior wisdom. Meredith concluded by remarking,—

"The High-church party accuse the Evangelical of narrow-mindedness; but the truth is, we are bound by no sect. We

can say, 'Grace be with all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity;' while the High Churchman will not go beyond the narrow limits of that portion of the Church of Christ to which he is ordained minister, unless he accord the same grace to the Romanist, by virtue of his Apostolic succession, in preference to the Dissenter, who, in truth, professes the same faith, though he changes the form of worship."

"Oh, Meredith!" exclaimed Louis, starting from the chair, "I am very unstable. I see how it is: *I* who was going to do so much here—I have been perverted, at least almost perverted myself. I wish I had not left Dashwood. I have had nothing but controversy ever since; first on one side, and then on the other. What good does it ever to any one? why cannot we believe in all our Saviour has done for us, without calling ourselves Calvinist or Arminian? I knew, to be sure, the existence of such differences, but they were nothing to me; and I have been neither happier nor more useful since I have been forced into these arguments. Why must men be eternally arguing on points which they never can understand?"

"And yet, I think a clergyman must make himself acquainted with doctrinal differences," replied Meredith, "or else he will allow himself and his flock with him to be blown about with every wind of doctrine; and even controversy has its uses. Men, with all their indolence and lukewarmness, might in many cases cease to search their Bibles diligently, if these disputed points did not rouse them to examination and self-defence. We are commanded to *prove all things*, and *to have an answer for every one that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us*."

Louis was silent, and Meredith sat intently watching the changing expression and flitting color of his downcast face.

Presently he raised his head, and spoke hurriedly, and with much emotion.

"But, oh, Meredith! for that childlike spirit that made David say, 'Lord, I have not exercised myself in matters that are too great for me!' I do not want to know more than God teaches me Himself."

"Well, that is right," said Meredith, gently. "What then? Does that militate against your making yourself sure on those points which God has revealed?"

"No; but may we not sometimes go further, or try to go further, than God has revealed, Meredith?" he added, with large glistening eyes. "I never imagined such thoughts as have been put into my mind lately. I am not strong enough nor calm enough for hard matters, and God's own Word says, 'Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.'"

"But what hard matters distress you now?" said Meredith. "I thought we had settled all the doubtful points."

"No; when those are quieted, the hardest rise. If I have gone wrong, Meredith, I owe it, humanly speaking, to quite an opposite influence. Meredith, are you a Calvinist?"

"I am not very fond of the names of Calvinist and Arminian," replied Meredith, gravely; "I believe that man is saved by God's grace alone, and that the faith by which he believes, is likewise solely His gift; that without His spirit helping us, we can perform no good work; that He has loved us with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving kindness He has drawn us. I believe, in short, dear Louis, what the Bible says, and I trust I try to receive all in a child-like spirit; and as a child cannot be made to understand many things he gradually learns as he reaches man-

hood, so I believe there are many things we *could* not understand, even if God chose to reveal them to us, and my mind quietly rests there, thankful for the love that has given me salvation, and content to understand *why*, when God pleases to teach me; and if He never see fit to teach me more of His secret things, to rest confidently on His unerring wisdom and unfailing love."

"And that is just where I wish to rest, Meredith," said Louis, in a low voice; "but lately, I have not been allowed to do so. I have been forced into controversy on those mysterious articles, Free-will, and God's Sovereignty; and I have been constantly pushed so far, and dictated to so dogmatically, that whenever the subject has been mentioned to me, it has caused an aching, trembling sensation, and made me feel farther from my Saviour; and I have seen this doctrine, in more than one instance, so little productive of charity and lovely conversation, that it has been no wonder if I have, whether in spirit of opposition I know not, been influenced the other way. The manner in which this doctrine has been urged upon me, has been such that it created a repugnance and rebellion where none existed previously, and has naturally made me fly to those in whom I have found more visibly the fruits of the Spirit,—'Love, long-suffering, goodness, meekness, gentleness;' and these are so eminently conspicuous in dear Nevinson, that I suppose my heart, through him, became inclined, without knowing it, to embrace his errors, where joined to so much piety."

"But who are you speaking of?" asked Meredith. "What do you mean?"

"Some very extreme Calvinists whom I have lately met," replied Louis. "One is an old friend of my father's, and I

came here with a feeling of veneration and respect for him, and this was greatly increased by his pleasant manners and kind attention to me on my arrival. At his house I became acquainted with a young clergyman, who holds a chapel of ease here. I had heard Mr. Strangeways preach, and was quite delighted at the prospect of knowing him. Since then, I have been so grievously disappointed at never hearing, either from his lips or those of his flock, whom I have met from time to time, any sweet conversation on the love of Christ and on our duties as members of His body, and yet so much vituperation against all who differ from them, that I cannot tell you how angry I have sometimes felt, when I returned from their company, where they had had the bad taste to speak to me of my friends, to hear Nevinson's sweet remarks on them ; to see how closely Nevinson endeavors to walk, how careful he is not to bring dishonor on the religion he professes. Is it wonderful I should listen to Nevinson and be willing to be persuaded by him ?"

"But has there been no pride and self-will in yourself, Louis ?"

"I know it ; I know it," said Louis, excitedly walking to the window and back ; "so much that I was often afraid ; and yet, Meredith, I often prayed, 'That which I see not, teach Thou me.'"

"And the prayer will be answered, dear Louis, rest assured," said Meredith, kindly. "God only can teach His own things, and 'He that believeth shall not make haste.'"

"How often I am reminded of that passage," said Louis, thoughtfully. "And so I would wish to wait patiently ; but is it not strange, Meredith, that believing that none but the elect can believe, and that no man can convince another, this party should attempt to force a conviction on me which, sup-

posing it be a right one, it is utterly impossible man's unaided reason *can* believe?"

"It is strange, and inconsistent too," replied Meredith; "but we are a mass of inconsistencies. A dear friend of mine used to say, 'Great zeal and great judgment would make a perfect character.' You cannot expect it. You must not forget how much of our natural character we carry into religion."

"I can go with my father's friend a certain distance," said Louis; "but he goes beyond me; he sets God's electing sovereignty first, and thinks nothing of any moment but that; and there seems to me a majesty, but no tenderness in his view; a sternness that makes me tremble. If I believed as he does, I could not preach. It is fatalism to me. I do not wonder his favorite preachers never invite sinners to come."

"I think you should not dwell upon it, certainly, Louis, if it excites you in such a manner; but why?—we know our free-will and the sovereignty of God are twined together so mysteriously, that we cannot separate them. We feel ourselves responsible for our actions, and yet a secret something tells us a greater will than man's orders all and turns all to His own purposes.

> 'There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough hew them as we will.'

I was very much struck with a beautiful view of God's love and his all-seeing foreknowledge put forth in a public meeting at which I was present a short time ago. It was to this purport: 'The lost will always know and lament in vain remorse their suicidal indifference to God's proffered mercy to ALL. The cry of each will be, "I did it myself!" while, at

the same time, the crown of the ransomed will be ever cast at the Redeemer's feet, and their song shall be, "Not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thy name be glory." "Grace, grace!" "He hath loved us with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness hath He drawn us!" ' The concluding observation of the speaker was thrillingly lovely. He bade us notice that word of our Lord, 'When the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, and all nations shall be gathered together before Him, He shall say to them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD; but to them on the left He will say, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared, not for *you*, *but* FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS.' "*

"Oh, Meredith!" exclaimed Louis, starting forward, "that word is worth ten thousand of gold and silver. Oh! surely the clear Word of God has an answer for every doubt. I want nothing more now. Surely, in His love, He permitted, nay, sent you to point this out to me. I am so thankful. A weight seems taken from my heart."

"I know all your anxiety by experience," said Meredith, "and I suspect I have been much harder of conviction than you, much longer in coming to a knowledge of the truth. I was so rebellious, that I am often lost in wonderment at the patience that bore with me, and saved me in spite of all. Like yourself, I was violently opposed to the reception of this doctrine from the conduct of some of its extreme upholders. There was a large family near my father's, who, in the long

* The above beautiful and animating remark was heard by the writer from Dr. Cumming's lips, at a recent public meeting. As the events of the story are supposed to take place a few years back, the authority could not be quoted in the text.

vacations, finding I was seriously disposed (that was dear Dashwood's work), made much of me; and I was in some danger of being puffed up, had it not been for my remembrance of your happy home, and the living epistle I had read there. They were Dissenters, and attended a large chapel in our neighborhood. There was very much in their conversation that you mention; and finding, at last, that I did not hold their views, I was deluged with books,—sermons, memoirs, and antidotes; all of which being presented or lent with 'a purpose,' only made me the more violently opposed, the latter suggesting numbers of oppositions which I should never otherwise have thought of. It was the Bible—the Bible alone, that convinced me long after." He paused, as if a sorrowful recollection had come over him.

"But did they not live consistently?" asked Louis.

"No; that was the great stumbling-block to me," said Meredith. "The whole family regularly went to chapel every Sunday, and to prayer-meetings in the week; prayer-meetings were held in the house. While the young people were children, they attended all this; but as the boys grew up they became the wildest, most reckless, depraved young men in the neighborhood; scoffers at religion and making mock at sin. There was no wonder why, Louis. No tender parent's love had taught them of the love of Christ; of the unerring signs of fellowship with Him. I was much with them, both in childhood and youth, but never once in my hearing, and others remarked the same,—never once were the parents known to remind them that they sinned against God; never taught them to strive to enter the strait gate. I have seen them severely punished for a fault, often trifling; but you will hardly believe that with this, *on no one occasion* was the slightest allusion made to the sin committed against God.

Louis," continued Meredith, after a pause, "God makes the corn to grow, and orders that men shall build themselves habitations, and work for their subsistence; but the corn must be sown, the building must be raised by man's labor, the sustenance sought; and the diligent hand makes rich. God is the giver of all, and the sovereign disposer of all; but He chooses that '*man shall work, as if all depended upon him, and pray, as if nothing depended upon him.*' "*

"That is exactly what I think," said Louis: "there is the promise, 'What a man soweth, that shall he also reap;' and there is the command, 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate,' 'Work while it is called to-day.'

"I once heard a dear old clergyman remark," continued Meredith, "one of the most spiritually-minded Christians I ever beheld, '*I am a Calvinist to-day and an Arminian to-morrow; I find both in the Bible.*' "

"I need not ask you, after this morning's sermon," said Louis, "whether you think it right to persuade and invite sinners to come to Christ."

A holy smile passed over Meredith's face as he looked upwards.

"Shall man rebuke those whom Christ suffers to come? 'Come unto Him, all ye that labor. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. The Spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth say come; and whosoever will, let him come.' Read our Lord's sermon on the mount. Read His declaration on the great day of the feast; read all the Acts of the Apostles through. How did the Apostles preach? 'Repent.' 'God calleth upon all men everywhere to repent. No, Louis; poor weak men, encompassed with infirmity, we ought to have compassion on the ignorant, and

* Recollections of a remark in a sermon.

them who are out of the way. We are ambassadors for Christ, to persuade men to be reconciled to God. As long as my God gives me a tongue to proclaim, I will cry 'COME. Free grace, repentance, faith, are all offered.' There is room in the Saviour's arms for ALL. He died for all."

"Meredith, this has been a blessed Sunday to me," said Louis, holding out his hand to his friend, which Meredith grasped warmly. "When I have fancied sometimes that Mr. Wells might be right, my hands have seemed paralyzed; I have felt I should in such case feel like him, no interest in missionary efforts or pastoral aid associations, or any thing by which the knowledge of Christ is spread. Where would the heathen be, and where should we have been, had the Apostles been of the same mind? Meredith, between High and Low Church, I have heard and really thought little lately about missions. I want to hear about yourself. How is it you are leaving your friends and home? I used once to wish to be a missionary, but lately I have either distrusted my powers, or have been unwilling to leave all for Christ's sake. When did you first think of it?"

"Long ago," replied Meredith, slowly; "before—before I was married, Louis," he said, with a spasmodic effort. "My dear Mary used to talk of it with me, and we used to look forward to going out together; but that was not to be. Our Heavenly Father saw perhaps I made an idol of her. It used to be such a dream," he continued in a thick voice—"it used to be such a dream to bring her to Dashwood. Such a twelvemonth of happiness could not last on earth; but I never thought of her removal."

"Dear Meredith," said Louis, "I did not mean to touch on that again. I am very indiscreet. I wish we had heard of this before."

"I yearned much for a Dashwood letter, though I easily divined the cause of your silence," said Meredith, when he had recovered himself; "but I could not write myself, and I have been very much occupied lately, for there has been much to arrange. I should not have left England this year perhaps, but an earnest appeal has been made to me, knowing my intentions, to go to Africa as early as possible. I could not hesitate, and it has been mercifully ordered, I doubt not. I trust I can say with Isaiah, 'Here I am, Lord, send me;' but, Louis, you cannot tell how precious every nook of that Rectory had become. I do not think it was a morbid remembrance of her, for indeed I would not call her back; but every thing, every room, almost every chair, reminds me of some sweet act of hers. It will do me good to speak of her to you. You cannot tell how she was beloved by high and low: so sweet, so gentle-hearted, and so true, and yet so bold in her Saviour's cause. What I owe to her I cannot tell you. A helpmate she was in every sense. So tender her conscience was, and though loving me so dearly, her love for her Redeemer was where it should ever be, a thousand-fold beyond."

Meredith paused a moment, for his voice had failed. Presently he continued—

"They say, when a loved one is taken from us, we are always blind to imperfections; but I never saw any there, Louis: *she* knew and felt them, but the constant power of restraining grace overcame them to mortal eyes. I wish you had seen her. She was not at all beautiful; even my loving eyes saw that; but do you know that halo peace gives to the countenance, and that sort of expression in the eyes as if they were looking beyond, Louis?"

"I have noticed it in several Christians," replied Louis.

"I never saw it in any one so strongly as it was in my Mary," continued Meredith, in a low quick voice; "and she was always looking beyond, 'looking to Jesus.' Truly of her it might be said, 'He that findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord.' I remember so well, last summer, such a night as this, we had finished all our Sabbath labors of love, and both were tired; she unusually so, sat, as she had often loved to sit, on a low stool, with her arms and head on my knee. There is a lovely view from my old home; a wooded country for a quarter of a mile, and the sea beyond. The sun was setting, and the calm water reflected all its colors. We watched its silent sinking below the horizon, and the rising of the pale moon and evening star. You know how lovely a time that is; it always seems to speak of heaven to me, and so it did to Mary: perhaps she drew me more to the observation of it. Suddenly she began to sing—

'Awake and sing the song
Of Moses and the Lamb!'

I joined her; and oh, how well I remember how softly and how sweetly she sang two verses! She broke off at the second, and said, 'I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God; and they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou king of saints! Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy.' Then she looked up at me and said, 'Hastings, how many things in the Revelation I am reminded of at these hours. How gracious our

blessed Teacher is to enable us to see Him in His works. Sometimes when I think of all His love to us both, I am afraid we should forget Him in His many bounties.' And then she raised herself, and spoke so rapturously about the joy of being always in God's presence—of the eternal Sabbath we should spend together. I cannot tell you how rapt her spirit seemed; and now I almost wonder no fear stole over me that she was so fit for heaven, but there was no presentiment in my mind how near she was to the commencement of that eternal Sabbath.

'A slumber did my spirits seal,
I had no human fears;
She seem'd a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.
* * * * *
"A violet by a mossy stone,
Half-hidden from the eye,—
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.'"

Meredith paused, and Louis did not break the little silence.

"She said to me much that night," he continued, "about the second coming of Christ: many things that took me back to Dashwood, where I heard much of it. I did not know till then how much she looked forward to that glorious time, nor had I thought it a duty, as I have since done, to keep it constantly before my people. That blessed remembrance is indeed much lost sight of. Well might our Lord say, 'When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith upon the earth?' Truly even the wise sleep.—Dear Mary, I can recall now the earnestness of her manner as she said, 'Hastings, that coming will take the whole world by surprise; we need constant communion. I often feel a little afraid—we have so happy a home—lest we should forget that we have

no continuing city here; and that solemn injunction, "Watch and pray always, that ye may be counted worthy to escape the things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." ' Then she put her dear hands together in mine, and asked me to pray for us, that our love for each other might not be a snare to us. Oh, Louis! how she held my hands up. They would often have been wearied in well-doing."

"And she would say the same of you," said Louis, in a faltering voice.

Another little pause of fond recollection, and the mourner proceeded,—

"Just four months ago; only four short months, Louis:—you will know my happiness if it ever pleases God to make you a father.—My precious little girl! my lamb in heaven!"

"Oh, Meredith!"—Louis's eyes were filled with tears—"your baby: I did not know yet the whole of your trial."

"In a fortnight she was laid in our little churchyard, Louis," said Meredith, bending his head down and speaking low; "another fortnight, and the mother was laid by her. Oh, Louis! the first was a great grief, but the last—I wonder," he added, in a choking voice, "how the worldly survive the loss of friends, when the children of God require so much of *such* support. But the strength was given according to the day. I often wonder how I was enabled to be so cheerful, when I knew I must give her up. Thank God!" he said, reverentially looking upward with swimming eyes, "I believe I never murmured, nor wished to stay His hand. Thank God, though the head was bent, I could lean it on His bosom; and there He has wiped my tears again and again!"

Louis drew his hand across his eyes, and both were silent for several minutes.

"I have seen several death-beds," said Meredith at length, not heeding an effort of Louis to stop him; "I have seen one or two happy ones, and have read of many more, but I never heard or read of one more triumphant than my dear Mary's. Every comfort that could be given to a poor weak man in his hour of need was given to me then. Once she turned her sweet eyes upon me as I supported her head—'Hastings, you will be so lonely?' It was almost in the form of a question. 'You forget,' I said, 'my own one, He hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."' 'Alone, yet not alone,' she murmured; 'both separated, yet not alone; both willing to part?' she asked again so anxiously of me. 'Both willing that the Father's will shall be done; both rejoicing in His love to them,' I answered. Oh! Louis, she looked so gratefully at me, and thanked me so sweetly for the love I could not have refused; and many times I heard her murmur, 'And yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me,' when she almost always looked at me as if anxious to know that I was resting on it,—dear one! I had wonderful strength given at that time. When the last was over (she died in my arms), I felt at first as if I could not mourn. We had rejoiced together that she was going to her Father, and I could only say with Mrs. Graham to her daughter, 'I wish you joy, my darling!' and it was not till rest and recollection came, and that first awakening from a long deep sleep, that I realized the fulness of my trouble; that I knew the desire of my eyes had gone from me. It seemed so strange to kiss her cold lips, and feel no return; to go among our favorite haunts, and miss her; and, Louis,—oh, Louis! it was a comfort to me to remember the 'strong crying' of our beloved Lord, who is afflicted in all the affliction of His people, for He has been tried in all points as we

are. The room in which she died always seems the gate of heaven to me. What a meeting ours will be! Instead of sinking, I thank God I am now only strengthened in zeal, and burn to exalt His cause and spread His kingdom, that so I may be enabled to glorify Him in the fires, and press forward. I must not look back, it is such gain to her. When I look up, I feel only the Christian's triumph; but when we look down to the grave and all its dark accompaniments, the spirit fails. You will think of me when I am away, Louis," he said, rising, "and pray for me. I shall need all prayers; and 'pray that the Lord of the harvest will send forth more laborers into His harvest.'"

Louis grasped Meredith's hand, and detained him a moment. He could not speak at first, though the brave spirit of his friend had infused some of its exulting tone into his heart.

"Meredith, you are a living witness of God's power in upholding His own in the day of trouble. I have been very fearful, often fearing possible afflictions. You have strengthened me."

Meredith pressed his hand.

"Never doubt His love or strength.

> "'Tis Jesus, the first and the last,
> Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
> We'll praise Him for all that is past,
> And trust Him for all that's to come.'"

The friends parted. Louis knelt long that night in prayer. There were many things to bring before his God. Thanksgiving for the good he had received that day, and earnest desires that any error he might have propagated among the people committed to his temporary care might not take root; and petitions for the renewal of a constant spirit and a right

judgment in all things; forgiveness for his pride and anger against Mr. Wells, for whom, as well as his dear friends, he prayed that God would teach and keep them; and oh! how earnest were his resolves to undo, if possible, in the parish any evil he might have been the means of strengthening or spreading in his mistaken zeal.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Then I saw in my dream, that in the morning the shepherds called up Christian and Hopeful, to walk with them upon the mountains. So they went forth with them, and walked a while, having a pleasant prospect on every side. Then said the shepherds one to another, Shall we show these pilgrims some wonders? So when they had concluded to do it, they led them first to the top of a hill called Error, which was very steep on the farthest side, and bid them look down to the bottom. So Christian and Hopeful looked down, and saw at the bottom several men dashed all to pieces by a fall which they had from the top. Then said Christian, What meaneth this? * * * * Then said the shepherds, Those that you see dashed in pieces at the bottom of this mountain are an example to others, to take heed how they clamber too high, or how they come too near the brink of this mountain."—*Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.*

But this last resolve seemed beyond his power to accomplish, for the next evening Trevannion returned. It is, alas! in our power to do evil by our unguarded conduct and precept, the extent of which may be incalculable, and the opportunity of annulling it never be given. So Louis thought. He could only hope in his sorrow, that he had not held these opinions long enough, nor declared them distinctly enough, to have made any impression; nor was he aware how much this was really the case, through an overruling Providence; so that by his congregation he was considered to be entirely free from the errors of his vicar, while there was so much

true piety visible in all that he did and said, that that only made its impression. Among the poor these erroneous doctrines never make much way. They are not suited to the poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked, to those who have been brought up in sin and ignorance, and to those who have nothing in life to make them love it; they want something more real and solid. The refined, the intellectual, the poetical, the reverential, the seriously minded, the man of taste, and the young, full of crude notions of priestly authority, who love to magnify the clerical office; these, where there is no vital religion, may be ready to embrace them; for there is something wonderfully fascinating to human pride and understanding therein. And there may be some few of God's own children who, through some mysterious permission of the Almighty, partially embrace this system; but we shall always find it is partial: there is a something that ever betrays them as in the corruption, but not of it: and such was Nevinson. His education, his circumstances, had all been different to Louis's; and perhaps most of those things on which they differed were but words, and not matter. Louis was still learning the same lessons he had been receiving for fourteen years,—that though man may increase in age and learning, he cannot stand alone. If he thinks he stands, he will assuredly fall. If he lean on human understanding, he and his prop will fall together. He had also learned another useful lesson from his own trials here, "that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God;"—that "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach in meekness, instructing those who oppose themselves;" that however much we may differ on the subject of man's free-will, we are constrained to use every power of persuasion, every talent for making our lessons lovely and

pleasant; and above all, every effort to make our lives speak, so that all men shall take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, and shall heed our words as those which come from His disciples.

Meredith left E—— early on the Monday morning, and as we have already said, Trevannion returned in the evening. Louis remained a week longer at E——, during which time some unpleasant words passed between him and Trevannion; the latter at first desiring to secure Louis's services altogether, and on Louis's open avowal of his opposing sentiments, parting very coldly from him. He was as angry as he ever allowed himself to be, on hearing of Meredith's preaching in his church, as well as at the slight innovations made during his absence; and before Louis had been a fortnight in his happy home, all was restored to more than its former state of cold solemnity, and the church nearly emptied. Louis had become again accustomed to his own old duties, when one day a letter from Nevinson arrived, informing him that Trevannion had begun to teach the choristers the responses in Latin, and had instituted a confessional in the church, and that he (Nevinson) was so shocked at these symptoms, that he had given up his curacy. Not three weeks after, a paragraph in a London paper announced the fact, that the Reverend Philip Trevannion had seceded from the Church of England, and had left E—— for Rome. Another long letter from Nevinson followed this shortly. He expressed himself much shocked at the conclusion of Trevannion's career, and wrote very seriously and satisfactorily, informing Louis that he had lately known so many perversions to Rome, that it had set him thinking whether these High-church principles were Bible principles; and he had been induced, after much prayer and examination, to give up some of his prejudices and

practices, still, however, retaining the greatest reverence and love for his own church. Louis thought often of, and prayerfully for his old charge, longing to learn whether the new appointment was satisfactorily made in the most important respect, and thinking painfully of the poor, large, dark population in its courts and alleys, often in his anxiety crying out, "Oh, send out Thy light and Thy truth."

Nearly two months after Trevannion's secession, to his great astonishment, an offer of the living to himself came from the trustees. Half delighted, half afraid, Louis opened his heart to the Lord, before even mentioning the contents of his letter to his parents. After many earnest supplications for guidance, he accepted the living, and not long afterwards entered upon it, to the great delight of his old people. And now he began many reformations. There was no curtailing of the services, for Louis loved them, and loved to invite others to the house of God; but the chancel was thrown open, the choristers were divested of their surplices, a new reading-desk erected on a line with the pulpit, and the black robe substituted for the surplice in the pulpit. Louis was not less careful about the singing of the church than before, for he rightly looked upon it as a very important part of the worship; but he endeavored, and finally in a measure succeeded, in establishing more congregational singing. Missionary sermons were now preached in the church, and efforts made to create a spirit of zeal among the people for assisting in the spreading of Christ's kingdom. Quietly, but surely, hanging upon his God, did Louis work, endeavoring to check display and religious dissipation among his flock; while he strove, at the same time, to represent to them, that the people Christ has chosen are a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These reformations and this activity were not, of

course, effected at once ; but we have the sure promise, and Louis found it, that in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Louis in time established a kind of little lecture or school-room in each court where a vacant room could be found, and endeavored to rouse the poor ignorant miserable ones to something better, by mixing himself as far as he was able with them, and showing that if he looked after their worldly prosperity, it was with the hope of leading them to something higher; and that if the thought of something higher had been absent, he could never have considered their present wants. He much desired to have his friend Nevinson with him; but that friend was now comfortably settled in his native place, and after a time the vacant curacy was filled by Hubert, a younger brother of Frank Digby's, to whom Louis gave a title to orders.

About a twelvemonth after Louis's final departure from his childhood's home, the bells of Dashwood Church rang merrily for a most important event,—the marriage of Miss Mortimer to Edward Hamilton, Esq., barrister-at-law. Louis was there to perform the ceremony; and a gay wedding it was; but it was hard to say whether tears or smiles prevailed at the departure of the village darling, missed sadly as she would be in hall and cottage. Reginald and Neville were there, and Master Freddy performed the important office of groomsman to his brother-in-law. To Louis especially the new relationship was an event of unmixed satisfaction.

The last news from our old friends was, that there was a rumor at E——— and at Dashwood, that Mr. Louis Mortimer was about to follow the example of his friend and new brother, and the rumor daily gains credit that Miss Fanny Salisbury is the lady who has promised to make

our hero happy, and to share with him the pleasant cares of his beloved office.

Dashwood Priory has become a very quiet place. Reginald left for the Cape almost immediately after his sister's marriage. Neville is settled in London, and only Freddy remains at home, to take the place which Louis first filled,—that of his father's curate. It is ever thus in this world; changes and partings all come to remind us that we have here no continuing city. Happy are they, who seeking one to come, have laid up their treasures where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal.

THE END.

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